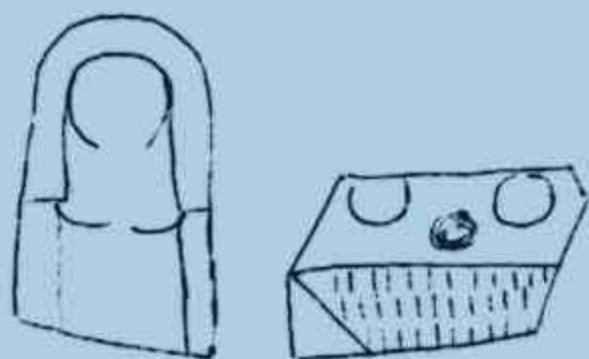


Elizabeth A. Waraksa

Female Figurines from the Mut Precinct

Context and Ritual Function



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FOREWORD

This monograph is a revised version of a Ph.D. dissertation submitted to the Johns Hopkins University in 2007. The manuscript was finalized during my tenure as a Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) Postdoctoral Fellow at the UCLA Library, and I am grateful to these two institutions for their support.

This book was inspired by my firsthand experience as a member of the Johns Hopkins Expedition to the Mut Precinct, and so first and foremost, I must thank Betsy Bryan, the director of the Johns Hopkins Expedition and my dissertation advisor, for inviting me to participate in the excavations, for permission to study the female figurines, and for her insightful comments throughout the research and writing process. Thanks are equally due to Richard Jasnow for his unending guidance during my years at Johns Hopkins.

I am grateful to the many colleagues who have shared with me their thoughts on, and images of, ceramic figurines from Egypt, the greater Near East, and the Classical world. In particular, I thank Richard Fazzini for discussing with me the female figurines uncovered at the Mut Precinct by the Brooklyn Museum Expedition; Emily Teeter for our many discussions on Egyptian female figurines, and for generously sharing with me the manuscript of her recent book on ceramic objects from Medinet Habu; Helen Jacquet-Gordon and Jean Jacquet for speaking with me at length about the female figurines they uncovered at North Karnak; and Gay Robins for sharing her insights with me on numerous occasions. I also thank my entire dissertation committee – Betsy Bryan, Richard Jasnow, Emily Teeter, Theodore J. Lewis, and Alan Shapiro – for their helpful comments and for encouraging me to publish this study as soon as possible.

I am eternally grateful to Jay Van Rensselaer for photographing the female figurines that appear in this volume, and to Betsy Bryan for allowing me to use the images for this study. The tireless work of Max Farrar and Violaine Chauvet resulted in the plan of the Mut Precinct that serves as the basis of Figure 10, and I thank them for their efforts, as well as Betsy Bryan for providing me with a copy of the plan.

I am indebted to all those who have participated in the Johns Hopkins Expedition to the Mut Precinct for their careful excavation, recording, and

identification of small finds. Thanks are naturally due to the Supreme Council of Antiquities, and its Secretary General, Dr. Zahi Hawass, for support of the Johns Hopkins Expedition to the Mut Precinct, which is conducted under the auspices of the American Research Center in Egypt. I would also like to thank our local SCA inspector in Luxor, Ahmed Araby, for his support of Johns Hopkins' work at the Mut Precinct. Further, I am grateful to our field director, Violaine Chauvet, for her training and mentorship on the excavation.

I would like to thank my editor at *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis*, Susanne Bickel, for her enthusiasm and patience during the preparation of this volume. I am also grateful to Faried Adrom of the University of Basel for his formatting assistance. I thank the *Institute Français d'Archéologie Orientale* and Cambridge University Press for permission to reproduce Figures 8 and 9, respectively.

In the summer of 2005, I embarked upon a research trip to study ceramic female figurines at several UK museums. The trip was generously funded by grants from the J. Brien Key Graduate Student Assistance Fund at the Johns Hopkins University, the Johns Hopkins Program for the Study of Women, Gender and Sexuality, and the Explorers Club Washington Group. I would like to thank Stephen Quirke and staff at the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, Nigel Strudwick and staff at the British Museum, and Helen Whitehouse at the Ashmolean Museum for their kind assistance in making female figurines available to me for study. Thanks are also due to Tom Hardwick for his assistance and hospitality in Oxford during that trip.

To my friends and classmates at Johns Hopkins who kept me laughing through graduate school and beyond - especially Lance Allred, Helene Coccagna, Denise Demetriou, Adam Maskevich, and Elaine Sullivan - I offer my heartfelt thanks. I also extend my gratitude to the staff of the Milton S. Eisenhower Library of the Johns Hopkins University for their generosity and collegiality over the years.

Ellen, Joanna, Kathy, Laura, Meg, Meredith, and Sinéad, I cannot thank you enough for your years of friendship, patience and encouragement. You are all angels to me.

To Jacco Dieleman I offer warm thanks, not only for his endless patience and unflagging support, but for our many conversations on the nature of

Egyptian magic, and for technical help when it was needed the most. This book would not have been completed without him.

Last but not least, I offer my deepest thanks to my family, and especially to my mother, Susan Holahan Waraksa, whose lifelong dedication to education and to my own scholarly endeavors is truly an inspiration. I dedicate this book to her.

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE SITE AND TYPOLOGY

1.1 Introduction

Ceramic figurines of nude females have received consistent, if not abundant, scholarly attention since the earliest days of Egyptian archaeology, appearing as they do at a variety of sites and thus in excavation reports, museum catalogues, and more specialized studies. In recent years, Egyptian female figurines have featured prominently in studies exploring the topics of women and private religion in ancient Egypt. The larger field of figurine studies, which owes much to the arrival of gender and feminist studies in academia, is also a vibrant one, with new scholarship on anthropomorphic figurines appearing seemingly daily. The present study builds upon, and has benefited much, from the work of scholars studying the manufacture, iconography, context, and use of female figurines from around the world. The objects under study here, however – the 42 ceramic female figurines excavated between 2001 and 2004 from the Temple Precinct of the Goddess Mut at Karnak by the Johns Hopkins University – are treated within their particular archaeological, historical, and cultural milieu.

This study was inspired by the firsthand experience of observing ceramic female figurines emerge from the soil at the Mut Precinct at Karnak. Two major traits became obvious as the figurines were excavated and quantified: their fragmentary nature, which was suggestive of deliberate breakage, and their frequent decoration with red pigment. While a ritual use for the figurines seemed evident from the start, it remained to be explicated exactly which types of Egyptian rituals would have involved ceramic female figurines, who would have participated in these rituals, and why these figurines, with their particular iconography and decoration, were selected for and utilized in the ritual, and then broken and discarded. Existing theories on Egyptian nude female figurines, including their role as votive fertility offerings, did not appear to match the physical evidence from the Mut Precinct.

The primary aim of this study is therefore to elucidate the ritual function of ceramic figurines of nude females in Egypt ca. 1550-332 BCE through the lens of the Mut Precinct figurines. In order to get closest to the ancient function of these figurines, a holistic approach has been taken. Chapter 1 presents a history of building and excavation at the Mut Precinct site, discusses the archaeological context of the Mut Precinct female figurines, addresses the current state of figurine studies in the field, and includes a typology for the Mut Precinct figurines, which range in date

from the New Kingdom to the Late Period. Chapter 2 investigates the processes by which the figurines were manufactured and decorated through a detailed, non-destructive examination of the figurines' materials. Chapter 2 includes a particular focus on the red wash present on many of the figures, an overview of Egyptian rituals involving ceramic objects, and the evidence for ceramic female figurine standardization and dissemination throughout Egypt.

Chapter 3 is a crucial one, making the all-too-rare connection between excavated archaeological material and known magical texts. It presents translations and commentary for two magico-medical spells calling for female figurines of clay, spells which demonstrate how and why figurines like the Mut Precinct examples were utilized in healing rituals. Chapter 3 also includes a survey of related spells calling for various types of clay figurines, revealing the pervasiveness of the practice.

Bringing together the conclusions of the previous chapters, Chapter 4 elucidates the ritual use of ceramic female figurines at the Mut Precinct specifically, suggesting that priests familiar with the appropriate magico-medical spells performed healing and apotropaic rituals for patients within the temple environs. A full catalogue of ceramic female figurines excavated by Johns Hopkins at the Mut Precinct between 2001 and 2004, including comparanda, follows the main text. The catalogue is followed by concordances of the Mut Precinct figurines by excavation location, catalogue number, and type.

It is my hope that this study will encourage future analyses of excavated small finds in concert with magical texts, which will in turn shed light on classes of objects whose function has yet to be fully explicated.

1.1.1 The Mut Precinct Site and History of Excavations

1.1.1.1 Location

The precinct of the goddess Mut at Karnak is located on the east bank of the Nile in modern Luxor, approximately 325 meters south of the precinct of the god Amun (25°43'N, 32°40'E).¹ Encompassing some 90,000 square meters of area, the Mut Precinct contains no less than six temples (the Mut Temple, the Contra Temple, Temples A, B, C, and D) and a sacred lake, called the *Isheru*, as well as a vast tract of still largely unexcavated land at

¹ Richard A. Fazzini, "Karnak, precinct of Mut." *Encyclopedia of the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Kathryn A. Bard. London and New York: Routledge, 1999. 397.

the south of the site.² Oriented towards the Amun precinct, the Mut Precinct was a center of the goddess's worship from at least the early 18th Dynasty, and continued as a religious site well into the Ptolemaic period. The precinct's structures underwent numerous building phases and modifications through the centuries before falling into disuse in Roman times. While the exact date of the last religious activity at the precinct is not known, by the fourth century AD, houses were constructed against and inside the temple buildings.³

1.1.1.2 Early References to Mut and Her Theban Temple

The earliest textual reference to "Mut, mistress of Isheru" (*Mwt nbt išrw*), her most common epithet as a Theban goddess,⁴ dates to the 17th Dynasty (ca. 1575 BC).⁵ Both a statue and a calendar inscription link the goddess to the site of *Isheru* in the early 18th Dynasty reign of Amenhotep I (1525-1504 BC).⁶ The temple of Mut (*pr Mwt*) itself is first mentioned in the tomb of Ineni (Theban Tomb 81), a high official of the 18th Dynasty who lived from the time of Amenhotep I into the co-regency of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III (ca. 1470s BC).⁷ A relief scene of the temple also appears in the 19th Dynasty tomb of Khabekhnet at Deir el-Medina (Theban Tomb 2), showing the state of the precinct in Ramesside times and including such details as colossal statues of Mut on both sides of a pylon, divine barks

² Richard A. Fazzini and William H. Peck, "Excavating the Temple of Mut." *Archaeology* 36 (1983) 16. Excavations at the far south of the precinct were begun by the Johns Hopkins Expedition in January 2004. A portion of these are addressed in Elaine Sullivan, "A Case Study in Function and Form: Excavations of a Third Intermediate Period Mud-Brick Building in Thebes." Dissertation, The Johns Hopkins University, 2008.

³ Fazzini, "Karnak, precinct of Mut," 398-9.

⁴ Herman te Velde, "Towards a Minimal Definition of the Goddess Mut." *Jaarbericht van het Voor-Aziatisch-Egyptisch Genootschap Ex Oriente Lux* 26 (1979-1980) 7.

⁵ British Museum EA 69536: Fazzini, "Karnak, precinct of Mut," 398. The chronology used in this work is that of *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Ian Shaw. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. 480-3.

⁶ Richard A. Fazzini, "Some Fragmentary Images." *Essays on Ancient Egypt in honour of Herman te Velde*. Ed. Jacobus van Dijk. Groningen: Styx, 1997. 74 and n.39.

⁷ Kurt Sethe and Wolfgang Helck, eds. *Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums, Abteilung IV: Urkunden der 18. Dynastie*. Fascicles 1-22. Leipzig and Berlin: 1906-1958. (henceforth *Urk. IV*) 71; te Velde, "Towards a Minimal Definition," 7; Betsy M. Bryan, "The 18th Dynasty Before the Amarna Period." *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, 237.

docked at quays on the lake, and what may be a canal or processional way on the south side of the sacred lake.⁸

1.1.1.3 Royal Names in the Mut Precinct

Cartouches and other inscriptions found in and around the Mut Temple name the rulers who built and modified the precinct's structures. The earliest dated cartouches are those of Thutmose II and III of the 18th Dynasty, carved into a sandstone gateway in the northwest of the precinct. However, Thutmose II's name is likely a replacement for the erased name of Hatshepsut, under whom the gateway was constructed.⁹

Amenhotep III, originally thought to be the founder of the Mut Temple but now recognized as a later contributor to the site,¹⁰ is named on the several hundred granodiorite statues of the goddess Sakhmet that were moved to the Mut Temple from their original location at his mortuary temple on the west bank of the Nile.¹¹ Outside of the Mut Temple proper, Ramesses II of the 19th Dynasty worked extensively in Temple A in the northeast of the precinct, placing two colossal statues of himself and two alabaster stelae in front of its first pylon. Ramesses III of the 20th Dynasty built Temple C in the southwest of the precinct, but that temple was out of service by Dynasty 25, when it became a quarry for renovations made to Temple A.¹²

⁸ Bertha Porter and Rosalind L.B. Moss, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings I: The Theban Necropolis Part 1: Private Tombs*. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960. 6; Agnès Cabrol, "Une représentation de la tombe de Khâbekhenet et les dromos de Karnak-sud: nouvelles hypothèses. Les béliers du dromos du temple de Khonsou et l'intérieur de l'enceinte du temple de Mout." *Cahiers de Karnak X*. Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1995. Pl. V; JJ Shirley, "Karnak Mut Precinct Project 2001: VIII G South – Season Report." (unpublished) 1.

⁹ Richard A. Fazzini, "Some Aspects of the Precinct of the Goddess Mut in the New Kingdom." *Leaving No Stones Unturned: Essays on the Ancient Near East and Egypt in Honor of Donald P. Hansen*. Ed. Erica Ehrenberg. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2002. 63.

¹⁰ Fazzini, "Karnak, precinct of Mut," 398-9; Fazzini, "Some Aspects," 73, 75.

¹¹ For a detailed study of these statues in their original context, see Betsy M. Bryan, "A Statue Program for the Mortuary Temple of Amenhotep III." *The Temple in Ancient Egypt: New Discoveries and Recent Research*. Ed. Stephen Quirke. London: British Museum Press for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1997. 57-81.

¹² Fazzini, "Karnak, precinct of Mut," 398-9; Fazzini and Peck, "Excavating," 20. Temple C was published by the Epigraphic Survey of the University of Chicago in *Reliefs and inscriptions at Karnak II*. The University of Chicago Oriental Institute publication v. 35. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936.

The Kushite ruler Taharqa of Dynasty 25 made major changes to the Mut Precinct. He constructed a new sandstone gateway in the northwest area of the site, the axis of which leads directly to Temple A, which he likely rebuilt at this time.¹³ In addition, Taharqa renovated portions of the Mut Temple proper, from the south side of the Second Court southwards, and erected a columned porch.¹⁴ For the Ptolemaic period, Ptolemy VI erected a small chapel inside the Mut Temple, and he and Ptolemy VIII are represented in the chapels near the Taharqa gateway known as Structure D.¹⁵ Several stelae mention construction at the Mut temple precinct by the Roman emperors Augustus and Tiberius (1st century BC – 1st century AD),¹⁶ and the Brooklyn Museum expedition to the site has recently uncovered evidence of such work,¹⁷ as well as an additional, though uninscribed, stela that may also date to the reign of Tiberius.¹⁸

1.1.1.4 Officials' Inscriptions from the Mut Precinct

Inscriptions on statues found inside the Mut Temple also mention the deeds of royal officials who worked at the site. Hatshepsut's steward, Senenmut,

¹³ Richard Fazzini and William Peck, "The Precinct of Mut During Dynasty XXV and Early Dynasty XXVI: A Growing Picture." *The Journal of the Society of the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 11 (1981) 122; Fazzini, "Report on the 1983 Season," 302, 306; Fazzini, "Karnak, precinct of Mut," 399.

¹⁴ Fazzini and Peck, "The Precinct of Mut," 116; Fazzini and Peck, "Excavating," 21-22.

¹⁵ Fazzini, "Karnak, precinct of Mut," 399; Fazzini, "Mut Precinct," 455-457.

¹⁶ Allard Pierson Museum 7763, Berlin 14401, British Museum 1552, and British Museum EA 398: Bertha Porter, Rosalind L.B. Moss and Ethel W. Burney, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings Vol. II: Theban Temples*, 2nd edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972. (henceforth *PM II*) 295; Claude Traunecker, "Une stèle commémorant la construction de l'enceinte d'un temple de Montou." *Karnak V* (1975) 141-158; Richard A. Fazzini and James Manning. "Archaeological Work at Thebes by the Brooklyn Museum under the Auspices of the American Research Center in Egypt, 1975-1977." *Newsletter of the American Research Center in Egypt* 101/102 (Summer/Fall 1977) 21; Herman de Meulenaere, "L'oeuvre architecturale de Tibère à Thèbes." *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 9 (1978) 69-73; Willem van Haarlem, ed., *Corpus Antiquitatum Aegyptiacarum. Allard Pierson Museum, Amsterdam*. Fascicle 1. Mainz: P. von Zabern, 1986. 60-62; Richard Fazzini, "Cat. 21: Stela Commemorating Benefactions for Mut by Augustus and Tiberius." *Cleopatra's Egypt: Age of the Ptolemies*. Robert S. Bianchi et al. Brooklyn, NY: Brooklyn Museum, 1988. 112-113; Fazzini, "Karnak, precinct of Mut," 399; Günther Hölbl, *Altägypten im Römischen Reich: der römische Pharao und seine Tempel*. Mainz: P. von Zabern, 2000. 25, 54 and Abb. 19.

¹⁷ Brooklyn Museum Features: Mut Precinct, History <<http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/features/mut/history.php>>.

¹⁸ Brooklyn Museum: Dig Diary <<http://digdiary.blogspot.com/2007/03/end-and-beginning.html>>.

refers to himself as “the architect of all the works of the queen...in the temple of Mut.”¹⁹ Puyemre, second priest of Amun in the reign of Hatshepsut, claims to have worked with limestone in the temple.²⁰ Similarly, Montuemhat, a high priest of Amun of the 25th Dynasty (ca. 690 BC), recorded on statue and wall inscriptions inside the Mut Temple that he organized construction in the temple, built a colonnade in sandstone, and built the goddess’s lake in the same material.²¹

1.1.1.5 History of Visitors, Expeditions to the Mut Precinct

The temples and sacred lake of the Mut Precinct at Karnak were never completely lost from view in the centuries following its demise as a religious site. Today, the precinct remains defined by the massive mud brick enclosure wall believed to be of 30th Dynasty construction,²² and is closed to the public.

The Mut Precinct was visited by a number of early travelers and missions between AD 1799 and 1845, and their diaries, plans, and photographs provide valuable information about the state of the precinct’s structures at the time when Egyptology was just emerging as a scholarly discipline. Recent excavations have shown that some of the early drawings were indeed quite accurate.²³ The Napoleonic Expedition, Jean-François Champollion, Sir John Gardiner Wilkinson, Nestor L’Hôte, James Burton, Robert Hay, and the Royal Prussian Expedition led by Karl Lepsius all recorded their visits to the Mut Precinct, and their plans have been consulted and updated as excavation continues at the site.

In the mid-1800s, several small-scale, limited excavations took place at the Mut Precinct site, with few results.²⁴ In 1895, Briton Margaret Benson was given a concession by the Egyptian Department of Antiquities to conduct a large-scale clearance of the temple. Benson thus became the first woman to be awarded permission to excavate her own site in Egypt, a fact she emphasized in her 1899 publication of the work, *The Temple of*

¹⁹ Cairo CG 579: *PM II*: 262; *Urk.* IV: 409.

²⁰ Cairo CG 910: *PM II*: 261; *Urk.* IV: 521; Fazzini, “Some Aspects,” 69-71.

²¹ Fazzini and Peck, “The Precinct of Mut,” 115; Jean Leclant, *Montuemhat, quatrième prophète d’Amon, ‘prince de la ville.’* Cairo: IFAO, 1961. 60, 68-69, 218, 223.

²² Fazzini, “Mut Precinct,” 456; Fazzini, “Karnak, precinct of Mut,” 399; Fazzini, “Some Aspects,” 70.

²³ Fazzini, “Report on the 1983 Season of Excavation at the Precinct of the Goddess Mut.” *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l’Égypte* 70 (1984-85) 304.

²⁴ Fazzini and Peck, “Excavating,” 18.

Mut in Asher.²⁵ With the assistance of her friend Janet Gourlay, Benson excavated for three seasons at the temple (1895-7), during which she cleared the First and Second courts and the Contra Temple, refined the plan drawn up by Auguste Mariette, and uncovered numerous high-quality pieces of statuary. Margaret Benson even restored and re-erected several statues in an effort to keep the temple neat.²⁶

Work at the Mut Precinct resumed in the 1920s with Maurice Pillet, who excavated and restored Temples A and C. Thereafter, Henri Chevrier made soundings at the site in anticipation of future work, although excavations did not ensue. In 1975, the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale (IFAO), under the direction of Serge Sauneron, cleared and recorded the Mut Temple's Ptolemaic propylon. Sauneron's posthumous publication of the project appeared in 1983,²⁷ and a translation of the religious calendar inscription from the structure was published by Anthony Spalinger ten years later.²⁸

A systematic investigation of the entire Mut Precinct began in 1976, led by Richard A. Fazzini and the Brooklyn Museum of Art, with the assistance of the Detroit Institute of Arts from 1978-2001.²⁹ The first aim of the Brooklyn expedition was to locate and examine all records relating to previous visitors and missions to the Mut Precinct, as well as to compile a corpus of monuments once on the site. A survey map of the site was also produced by the Brooklyn team with the assistance of the Centre Franco-Égyptien d'Étude et de Restauration des Temples de Karnak (CFEETK) and l'Institut Géographique National (IGN), enabling the Mut Precinct to be tied into the larger grid established for all of Karnak. By 1982, corrections to the former plans of the precinct were nearly complete, the Brooklyn expedition having revisited previously excavated areas inside the Mut Temple proper, Temple A, and the Contra Temple.³⁰

²⁵ Margaret Benson and Janet Gourlay. *The Temple of Mut in Asher*. London: John Murray, 1899.

²⁶ William H. Peck, "The Short Egyptological Career of Margaret Benson and Her Three Seasons of Excavation in the Temple of the Goddess Mut at Karnak (1895-1897)." <http://www.geocities.com/athens/styx/3776/Benson1.html> and <http://www.geocities.com/athens/styx/3776/Benson2.html>.

²⁷ Serge Sauneron, *La porte ptolémaïque de l'enceinte de Mout à Karnak*. Cairo: IFAO, 1983.

²⁸ Anthony J. Spalinger, "A Religious Calendar Year in the Mut Temple at Karnak." *Revue d'égyptologie* 44 (1993) 161-183.

²⁹ Brooklyn Museum Features: Mut Precinct, History <http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/features/mut/history.php>.

³⁰ Fazzini and Peck, "Excavating," 19.

The Brooklyn expedition also began new excavations starting in 1976. The earliest *in situ* archaeological evidence for the Temple of Mut uncovered by the Brooklyn team is the monumental stone gateway and mud brick enclosure wall in the northwest of the precinct inscribed for Thutmose II and III. Excavated in 1983, the gateway can in fact be dated to the reigns of Hatshepsut (1473-1458 BC) and Thutmose III (1479-1425 BC), taking the Thutmose II cartouches as a replacement for the erased names of the female ruler.³¹ The gateway and its adjoining wall both appear in the 19th century plans made by Auguste Mariette and Karl Lepsius, and may be portions of an early, if not the earliest, enclosure wall for the temple.³² Additionally, both the erased name of Hatshepsut, as well as the likely graffito of Senenmut on interior south jamb of the doorway, seem to confirm the statements made by Senenmut and Puyemre that they were active in the Mut Temple during her reign.³³

Other early (i.e. New Kingdom) evidence uncovered by the Brooklyn expedition includes Amarna-age (ca. 1352-1336 BC) damage to divine names on the same Hatshepsut/Thutmose III gateway, and repairs to the gateway made in the reign of Seti I (1294-1279 BC), who inscribed renewal inscriptions on the thicknesses of its jambs.³⁴ The Brooklyn excavations to date have also uncovered the earliest platform of the main Mut Temple, dated no later than the time of Thutmose III and Hatshepsut;³⁵ a limestone structure atop the platform dated to Hatshepsut by a decorated limestone fragment containing an altered version of her *prenomen*;³⁶ and a foundation stratum along the east wall of the Mut Temple containing blue painted sherds that “could conceivably belong to a time such as that of Amenhotep III,” suggesting that Amenhotep III was the ruler who enlarged the original temple platform.³⁷ In addition to these New Kingdom discoveries, the Brooklyn mission has concentrated their efforts on clarifying the Third Intermediate, Ptolemaic, and Roman period activities at the Mut Precinct - work which continues today³⁸ - and has published extensively on those findings.³⁹

³¹ Fazzini, “Karnak, precinct of Mut,” 398; Fazzini, “Some Aspects,” 63-76.

³² Fazzini, “Report on the 1983 Season,” 305-7; Fazzini, “Some Aspects,” 67.

³³ Fazzini, “Some Aspects,” 70-72; Peter F. Dorman, *The Monuments of Senenmut: Problems in Historical Methodology*. London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 1985. 27.

³⁴ Fazzini, “Some Aspects,” 65.

³⁵ Fazzini, “Some Aspects,” 72.

³⁶ Fazzini, “Some Aspects,” 74-75.

³⁷ Fazzini, “Report on the 1983 Season,” 294-5; Fazzini, “Some Aspects,” 75-6.

³⁸ The Brooklyn Museum expedition’s online dig diary can be viewed at

1.1.1.6 Summary of Johns Hopkins University Excavations 2001-2004

The Johns Hopkins University Expedition to the Mut Precinct, under the direction of Professor Betsy M. Bryan, began work at the site in January 2001.⁴⁰ The overall research aim of the Hopkins expedition is to reconstruct the earliest phases of the Mut Temple, including the Sacred Lake and the unexcavated area to its south, both on paper and on computer.⁴¹

To this end, the Hopkins expedition has sited excavation trenches in several key positions around the precinct in an effort to clarify the New Kingdom layout of the temple.⁴² By the conclusion of the 2004 season, the Johns Hopkins team had excavated approximately 1725 square meters of area over its four winter seasons (2001-2004),⁴³ but as preliminary reports of the excavations have not yet been published, I present here only a brief summary of the work.

<<http://digdiary.blogspot.com/>> and the Brooklyn Museum Community blog, <<http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/community/blogsphere/bloggers/tag/digdiary2008>>.

³⁹ e.g. Richard A. Fazzini, "A Monument in the Precinct of Mut with the Name of the God's Wife Nitocris I." *Atribus Aegypti*. Eds. Herman DeMeulenaere and Luc Limme. Brussels: Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, 1983. 51-62; Richard A. Fazzini, "A Sculpture of King Taharqa (?) in the Precinct of the Goddess Mut at South Karnak." *Mélanges Gamal Eddin Mokhtar*. Ed. Paule Posener-Kriéger. Cairo: IFAO, 1985. 293-306; Richard A. Fazzini, "Some American Contributions to the Understanding of Third Intermediate and Late Period Egypt." *The American Discovery of Ancient Egypt: Essays*. Ed. Nancy Thomas. Los Angeles: Museum Associates, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1996. 111-129; Richard A. Fazzini, "Two Images of deified Ptolemies in the Temple Precinct of the Goddess Mut at South Karnak." *Egypt, Israel and the Ancient Mediterranean World: Studies in Honor of Donald B. Redford*. Eds. Gary N. Knoppers and Antoine Hirsch. Probleme der Ägyptologie 20. Leiden: Brill, 2004. 287-30; Richard A. Fazzini, "Two Semi-Erased Kushite Cartouches in the Precinct of Mut at South Karnak." *Causing His Name to Live: Studies in Egyptian Epigraphy and History in Memory of William J. Murnane*. Eds. Peter J. Brand and Louise Cooper. 2006. <<http://history.memphis.edu/murnane/>>; Richard A. Fazzini, "Some objects found before the first pylon of the Mut Temple." *The Archaeology and Art of Ancient Egypt: Studies in Honor of David O'Connor*. Eds. Zahi A. Hawass and Janet E. Richards. Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte Cahiers 36. Cairo: Conseil Suprême des Antiquités de l'Égypte, 2007. 277-289; Richard A. Fazzini and Jacobus van Dijk, "Recent work in the Mut precinct at South Karnak." *Egyptian Archaeology* 31 (2007) 10-13; Richard A. Fazzini and Richard Jasnow, "Demotic Ostraca from the Mut Precinct in Karnak." *Enchoria* 16 (1988) 23-48.

⁴⁰ The Johns Hopkins Expedition's online dig diary can be viewed at <<http://www.jhu.edu/egypttoday>>.

⁴¹ Betsy M. Bryan, "Report on 2003 Season at the Temple of Mut." (unpublished) 1; "Final Report on 2001-2004 Seasons at the Temple of Mut." (unpublished) 2.

⁴² See **Fig. 10**. A list of the 2001-2004 Johns Hopkins Expedition excavation squares can be found in **Table 1**.

⁴³ **Table 1** shows 69 individual JHU trenches of approximately 5x5 meters each.

In 2001, the Thutmose III/Hatshepsut gateway was cleared down to its threshold stones, continuing the work begun at that location by the Brooklyn mission.⁴⁴ Additionally, excavation began in the area just south of the Sacred Lake designated VIII G South on the Karnak grid, a zone where New Kingdom remains were thought to exist just beneath the topsoil.⁴⁵ The excavation of two 10 x 5 meter squares in 2001 confirmed this belief, revealing mud brick architecture and pottery of the late Second Intermediate Period and New Kingdom less than 50 centimeters beneath the modern surface.⁴⁶ Work within the Mut Temple proper was also begun in 2001, including efforts to re-erect, consolidate, and excavate the area around the Sakhmet statues still remaining in the temple's First Court. A Late Period gateway at the west of the First Court was also cleared during the 2001 season.⁴⁷

In the 2002 season of the Johns Hopkins University Expedition to the Mut Precinct, work continued in the areas noted above. The Thutmose III/Hatshepsut gateway received additional attention on its east side, where paving stones leading from the gate towards the Mut Temple were uncovered near the end of the season. The ceramic evidence from these excavations showed that the gateway was in use from the 18th through the 26th Dynasties, at which time it seems to have been replaced by the 25th Dynasty gate constructed just to the north.⁴⁸ The area south of the Sacred Lake became of special interest in 2002, owing to the New Kingdom mud brick and ceramic finds of the previous season, and a total of 10 excavation units were opened in the VIII G East (formerly South) and VIII G West areas in 2002. What was revealed were a series of storage and industrial installations of the Second Intermediate Period and New Kingdom.⁴⁹ Work also continued inside the Mut Temple proper, where the axis of the Late Period gateway was followed westwards, in the hopes of clarifying its processional way in relation to the Thutmose III/Hatshepsut gateway. Excavation also took place within the Mut Temple's Second Court in the 2002 season, so as to better understand the sequence of building activity in

⁴⁴ Richard A. Fazzini, "The Precinct of the Goddess Mut at South Karnak 1996-2001." *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 79 (2005) 88.

⁴⁵ Shirley, "Karnak Mut Precinct Project 2001: VIII G South – Season Report," 1.

⁴⁶ Shirley, "Karnak Mut Precinct Project 2001: VIII G South – Season Report," 3-8.

⁴⁷ Fazzini, "The Precinct of the Goddess Mut at South Karnak 1996-2001," 88. While the precise date of this gateway is not known, Fazzini remarks that its construction suggests that it is pre-Ptolemaic.

⁴⁸ Bryan, "Report on 2003 Season," 1.

⁴⁹ Bryan, "Final Report on 2001-2004 Seasons at the Temple of Mut," 2; "2006 Report on the Johns Hopkins University Excavations at the Mut Temple," 1-2.

that area. Finally, some excavation was performed inside Temple C. There, under the floor of the rear sanctuary, a greywacke statue of Ramesses III was found. The statue, which was likely the cult image for the temple, was reconstructed in 2003 and is now on display at the Luxor Museum.⁵⁰

The 2003 season built upon the finds of the previous two seasons, and the Expedition again concentrated its efforts on the zones of the temple precinct known to have been active in the New Kingdom. In 2003, the Thutmose III/Hatshepsut gateway area was excavated along the east face of its southward-running mud brick enclosure wall, where a post-New Kingdom thickening was revealed. The industrial area south of the Sacred Lake (VIII G East, Central and West) was again focused upon in 2003, and the result was the identification of a New Kingdom mud brick and plaster enclosure wall (the so-called 'inner' enclosure wall) located just five meters north of a larger enclosure wall first revealed in 2002, the so-called 'outer' enclosure. The inner enclosure was found to run east-west immediately south of the Sacred Lake, and was followed for some 60 meters in 2003, where it continued westward behind (i.e. south of) Temple C, although without the anticipated turn towards the north that might connect it with the Thutmose III/Hatshepsut enclosure wall.

Open-air storage and industrial rooms were found appended to the north of the outer enclosure wall in VIII G West, and 18th Dynasty pottery and refuse were excavated here exactly between the inner and outer enclosure walls. Trenches excavated against the southern portion of the outer enclosure wall in VIII G West also produced 18th Dynasty mud brick architecture and occupation, with the most salient finds being a stamped jar handle of Thutmose III, and a large (approximately 4m in diameter) mid-18th Dynasty granary.⁵¹ In VIII G East, baking and brewing installations of the Second Intermediate Period and 18th Dynasty were revealed. Work inside the Mut Temple itself in 2003 consisted of the restoration of Sakhmet statues and general cleaning in the Second Court.⁵²

In 2004, the Johns Hopkins Expedition continued work at the Thutmose III/Hatshepsut gateway, behind the Sacred Lake, and inside the Mut Temple's Second Court. The New Kingdom enclosure wall was followed for some 20 meters southwards from the Thutmoside gateway and exhibited a turn to the west. Behind the Sacred Lake, in VIII G East, Central and West, numerous other granaries were revealed,⁵³ together with

⁵⁰ <<http://www.jhu.edu/egypttoday/2005/pages/12005.html>>.

⁵¹ Bryan, "Final Report on 2001-2004 Seasons at the Temple of Mut," 2-4.

⁵² Bryan, "Report on the 2003 Season," 2-4.

⁵³ An in-depth discussion of the Mut Precinct granaries, including reconstructions, can be

more industrial activity areas south of the outer enclosure wall. A large dump of mixed-date pottery, ranging from Dynasties 18-26, was also uncovered just south of the eastern portion of the inner enclosure wall in VIII G Central 3. Thus far, no pottery has been found in the VIII G East, Central or West areas that can be certainly dated later than the 26th Dynasty.⁵⁴ In addition, a preliminary excavation of the previously untouched area at the very south of the precinct (designated IX G West) was begun. Mud brick architecture was found in several of the seven trenches opened in this area, with the majority of the ceramic dating from the Third Intermediate to Late Periods. While the exact nature of occupation in this area remains to be clarified, concentrated excavation in subsequent seasons revealed a mud brick building of the Third Intermediate Period.⁵⁵

1.2 Background to Female Figurine Studies

In all of the general areas of the Mut Precinct mentioned above, save for within the Mut Temple proper, fragments of nude female figurines in baked clay have been found by the Johns Hopkins Expedition (see **Table 1**, **Fig. 10**, **Appendix A**, and **Concordances**). Following a brief review of the state of figurine studies up to the present and several critical notes, a typology of the Mut Precinct female figurines will be presented.

Small, portable figurines of nude females exist for nearly every period of ancient Egyptian history, from Predynastic to Graeco-Roman times, and occur in a variety of materials.⁵⁶ Ceramic female figurines have been found in the full range of excavated sites in Egypt, from houses, temples, and tombs in the Nile Valley, to cemeteries in the western oases,

found in Kathelene Knight, "Reconstructing the Mut Temple Granaries: A New Model." Master's thesis, The Johns Hopkins University, 2005, soon to be published in abbreviated form.

⁵⁴ Bryan, "2006 Report on the Johns Hopkins University Excavations at the Mut Temple," 1.

⁵⁵ An investigation of the far south of the precinct was undertaken by Elaine Sullivan, a member of the Johns Hopkins team and a 2004-05 ARCE fellow, as the focus of her doctoral dissertation, "A Case Study in Function and Form: Excavations of a Third Intermediate Period Mud-Brick Building in Thebes." Dissertation, The Johns Hopkins University, 2008.

⁵⁶ Geraldine Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*. Oxford: Griffith Institute/Ashmolean Museum, 1993. 225; Emily Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines and Votive Beds from Medinet Habu*. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2009. 7-8; Elizabeth A. Waraksa, "Female Figurines (Pharaonic Period)." *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*. Ed. Willeke Wendrich. Los Angeles, 2008. <<http://repositories.cdlib.org/nelc/uee/1033/>>.

mining sites in the Eastern Desert and Sinai Peninsula, and Nubian forts, and in many cases derive from refuse zones in proximity to these areas.⁵⁷

From the earliest days of Egyptian archaeology, the presence of nude female figurines at excavation sites was at the very least noted in field reports,⁵⁸ and in many cases, the figurines were collected, catalogued, photographed or drawn, and published,⁵⁹ a somewhat surprising fact given their status as non-royal objects of everyday life that rarely conform to the official canon of Egyptian art.⁶⁰ As a result of the early and persistent consideration given to ceramic female figurines, they have become well-known to archaeologists and art historians of ancient Egypt, and continue to be registered as small finds on archaeological expeditions, as well as displayed in museum installations.

Even with significant numbers of female figurines appearing in publications from the 1890s onwards, however, the exact function(s) of the objects has remained elusive. They have been variously referred to in the Egyptological literature as ‘toys,’ ‘dolls,’ ‘wife figures,’⁶¹ ‘concubines (du mort)’⁶² or ‘Beischläferin.’⁶³ Many of these terms were employed on the erroneous assumption that the figurines were to serve as a male tomb

⁵⁷ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 198-209, 225-234; Céline Boutantin, “Les figurines en terre crue de la nécropole de Balat.” *Bulletin de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale* 99 (1999) 41-61; Frédéric Colin, with the collaboration of Sandrine Zanatta, “Hermaphrodite ou parturiente? Données nouvelles sur les humanoïdes de terre crue en contexte funéraire (Qaret el-Toub, Bahariya 2005).” *Bulletin de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale* 106 (2006) 21-55; Elizabeth A. Waraksa, “Female Figurines (Pharaonic Period).” *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*. Ed. Willeke Wendrich. Los Angeles, 2008. <<http://repositories.cdlib.org/nelc/uee/1033/>>.

⁵⁸ e.g. Benson and Gourlay, *The Temple of Mut in Asher*, 75-76.

⁵⁹ e.g. W.M.F. Petrie, *Kahun, Gurob and Hawara*. London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner, and co, 1890. 37-38, pl. 18.32-2, 37; *Illahun, Kahun and Gurob*. Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips; Encino, Calif.: J. L. Malter, 1974 (originally published: London, 1891) pl.27.2, and many other of Petrie’s reports, setting the trend for archaeologists to follow.

⁶⁰ John Baines, “Society, Morality, and Religious Practice.” *Religion in Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Byron E. Shafer. London: Routledge, 1991. 182; Gay Robins, *Art of Ancient Egypt*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2000. 12, 114; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 225; Peter F. Dorman, *Faces in Clay: Technique, Imagery, and Allusion in a Corpus of Ceramic Sculpture from Ancient Egypt*. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag P. von Zabern, 2002. 26. For further remarks on the figurines’ iconography, see Chapters 2.4, 3.2 and 4.

⁶¹ Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 59-60; *Funeral Furniture*, 8-9, 12.

⁶² e.g. Christiane Desroches-Noblecourt, “Concubines du mort et mères de famille au Moyen Empire.” *Bulletin de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale* 53 (1953) 7-47.

⁶³ e.g. Wolfgang Helck, “Beischläferin.” *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*. Eds. Wolfgang Helck and Eberhard Otto. 7 vols. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1975-1992. (henceforth *LA*) I: 684-686.

owner's magical sexual partner in the next life.⁶⁴ This view likely arose due to the fact that many early excavations uncovered female figurines in mortuary contexts.⁶⁵ It has since become clear from the archaeological evidence that female figurines could be placed in the tombs of men, women, and children, and were deposited in domestic and temple areas as well.⁶⁶ The concubine theory - and its terminology - has now largely been abandoned.

The most comprehensive studies of Egyptian nude female figurines dating to the early 18th Dynasty and beyond (the date range of the Mut Precinct figurines) are Geraldine Pinch's 1983 article, "Childbirth and Female Figurines from Deir el-Medina and el-'Amarna,"⁶⁷ and 1993 monograph, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*. In the latter, an immense and indispensable study of the most common types of objects dedicated to the goddess Hathor, Pinch includes a chapter on nude female figurines of the Middle through New Kingdoms. Building upon the ideas put forth in her 1983 article, Pinch persuasively argues a thesis first suggested by the French excavator Bernard Bruyère,⁶⁸ which asserts that figurines of nude females "belong primarily to the sphere of magical and religious practices to promote and protect fertility in daily life."⁶⁹

By collecting more than 700 provenanced examples of nude female figurines and contrasting the archaeological reality with existing theories about the figurines' function, Pinch is able to thoroughly and convincingly dismiss a host of untenable notions, including that such figurines functioned as 'dancing girls,' a representation of a divine mother, symbols of male sexuality, concubines or wife figures, or toys.⁷⁰ Pinch is then able to use the data she has amassed to formulate her own hypothesis, which suggests that "[t]he figurines were sometimes offered to, or placed in the vicinity of, higher powers such as the spirits of the dead or deities

⁶⁴ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 214.

⁶⁵ Pinch, "Childbirth and Female Figurines," 410 n.35.

⁶⁶ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 214, 226-234.

⁶⁷ *Orientalia* 52 (1953) 404-415.

⁶⁸ Bernard Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Médineh (1934-5)*. Cairo: IFAO, 1939. 127, 129-150; *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Medineh (1948-51)*. Cairo: IFAO, 1953. 36.

⁶⁹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 225.

⁷⁰ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 211-221, 226-234.

associated with fertility” or “could also be included in the funerary equipment of both males and females to ensure the fertility of the deceased in the afterlife and/or to assist in their rebirth.”⁷¹

Pinch advances this hypothesis by succinctly reviewing the archaeological, textual, and religious evidence for ancient Egyptians’ anxieties about conception, (re)birth, and family life, and proposing that female figurines found in houses, temples and tombs played a votive role in expressing those concerns.⁷² She reiterates that the term she finds most appropriate for these objects is ‘fertility figurines,’ a phrase she first proposed for nude female figurines a decade earlier.⁷³ Pinch’s very broad definition of ‘fertility’ - “everything from the conception of a child to its successful delivery, and including the nursing and rearing of the child”⁷⁴ - enables her to account for the presence of female figurines in a number of contexts and ultimately, to link the figurines specifically to the goddess Hathor.⁷⁵

Since the publication of Pinch’s work, ‘fertility figurines’ has become the standard designation for nude female figurines referenced in Egyptological literature, and her hypothesis has been accepted largely without reservation, being reiterated in studies of female figurines up to the present.⁷⁶ The term ‘fertility figurines,’ however, may not be appropriate for all nude female figurines when one considers the Egyptians’ own statements regarding figures of clay and their uses.⁷⁷ The relevant texts will be treated in detail in Chapter 3, but it can be briefly stated here that referring exclusively to ceramic female figures as ‘fertility figurines’ may go against Pinch’s own warning that, “[i]t is probably a mistake to limit the functions of the figurines too far.”⁷⁸ In this study, I refer to all nude female figures as ‘female figurines,’ preferring this neutral term for reasons to become clear below.

⁷¹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 225.

⁷² Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 221-225.

⁷³ Pinch, “Childbirth and Female Figurines,” 405.

⁷⁴ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 222-223.

⁷⁵ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 222, 225.

⁷⁶ e.g. Anna Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna: the material evidence*. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2006, and Emily Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines and Votive Beds from Medinet Habu*. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2009.

⁷⁷ A body of evidence that Pinch does not consider in her study; see below, Chapter 3.

⁷⁸ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 223. Such a caveat is reiterated by P.R.S. Moorey in the online catalogue of Ancient Near Eastern terracotta figurines in the Ashmolean Museum: Moorey, *Ancient Near Eastern Terracottas in the Ashmolean Museum*, <<http://www.ashmolean.org/ash/amocats/anet/ANET-Download.html>>, 9.

Recent archaeological and anthropological literature has placed much emphasis on figurine studies, particularly in the wake of Marija Gimbutas' 'Goddess' theory⁷⁹ and owing to the arrival of gender and feminist studies in academia.⁸⁰ A case in point is the 1996 "Viewpoint" section of the *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*, which asked contributors to answer the question, "Can We Interpret Figurines?". The answer, from scholars whose research concerns anthropomorphic figurines from a variety of cultures, was a resounding "Yes."⁸¹ However, their responses were not without the essential critique of past figurine studies,⁸² as well as fervent appeals for better contextualization.⁸³ Egyptologists Angela M.J. Tooley and Stephen Quirke have also stressed the critical importance of archaeological context in the assessment of Egyptian figurines,⁸⁴ and it is this fundamental component of figurine studies that I will address below, and throughout this study.

A shortcoming in Pinch's study of Egyptian nude female figurines concerns her presentation of the objects' excavated context. She mistakenly states that, "Fertility figurines have been found in three contexts; houses,

⁷⁹ Outlined in Marija Gimbutas, *The Goddesses and Gods of Old Europe, 6500-3500 bc: Myths and Cult Images*. 2nd edition. London: Thames & Hudson, 1982; *The Language of the Goddess: Unearthing Hidden Symbols of Western Civilization*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1989; *The Civilization of the Goddess: the World of Old Europe*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1991; and *The Living Goddesses*. Ed. and suppl. Miriam Robbins Dexter. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

⁸⁰ Naomi Hamilton, "The Personal is Political." *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 6 (2) (1996) 283-4.

⁸¹ Naomi Hamilton, Joyce Marcus, Douglass Bailey, Gunnar and Randi Haaland, and Peter J. Ucko. "Viewpoint: Can We Interpret Figurines?" *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 6 (2) (1996) 281-307; Moorey, *Ancient Near Eastern Terracottas*, 2.

⁸² As steeped in personal socio-political concerns: Hamilton, 282-285; as hindered by the large quantity of unprovenanced figurines: Marcus, "The Importance of Context in Interpreting Figurines," 285-291; as lacking in useful definition: Bailey, "The Interpretation of Figurines: the Emergence of Illusion and New Ways of Seeing," 291-295; as performed without the necessary cultural background: Haaland, Gunnar and Randi, "Levels of Meaning in Symbolic Objects," 295-300; as assuming monolithic categories and failing to mesh archaeological data with interpretive frameworks: Ucko, "Mother, Are You There?," 300-304.

⁸³ Most notably in Marcus' contribution, "The Importance of Context in Interpreting Figurines," 285-291. For a recent reiteration of the issues facing figurine scholars, see e.g. Ian Kuijt and Meredith S. Chesson, "Lumps of Clay and Pieces of Stone: Ambiguity, Bodies, and Identity as Portrayed in Neolithic Figurines." *Archaeologies of the Middle East: Critical Perspectives*. Eds. Susan Pollock and Reinhard Bernbeck. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2005. 152-183.

⁸⁴ Angela M.J. Tooley, "Child's Toy or Ritual Object?" *Göttinger Miszellen* 123 (1991) 101-111; Quirke, Stephen. "Figures of clay: toys or ritual objects?" *Lahun Studies* (1998) 141-151.

burials, and temples.”⁸⁵ This is only true in the most general sense, and does not accurately convey the wide variety of locales from which nude female figurines have been excavated.

The very broad designations ‘Tomb site,’ ‘Temple,’ and ‘Town’ that Pinch uses to indicate the provenance of her corpus of female figurines⁸⁶ are misleading in several ways. First, when studying Pinch’s lists of figurines, the reader has no way to discern whether a female figurine was uncovered in its primary context of use (i.e. in a particular room of a house), or in a secondary context (i.e. a trash pit), without further investigation. This is complicated by the fact that in some cases, Pinch infers a primary context for figurines, even when a secondary context is clearly stated by the excavators.⁸⁷ While in a few instances Pinch includes notations such as “Temple refuse”⁸⁸ or Tomb refuse”⁸⁹ to clarify a broader designation, close examination of her references reveals that she is not at all consistent in indicating the context of figurines, often preferring to assign discarded figurines to an original ‘Tomb site,’ ‘Temple’ or ‘Town.’

Second, there are inherent ambiguities in Pinch’s manner of indicating provenance, because her three general categories are more fluid than her lists would suggest. For example, dwellings can exist within temple precincts,⁹⁰ and burials certainly took place within ‘Town’ or ‘Temple’ sites.⁹¹ This further muddles the provenance of the female figurines in her corpus.

The specifics that Pinch omits with regard to figurines’ provenance and the ambiguous nature of her terminology have serious implications for our understanding of the function and meaning of nude female figurines. By fitting all nude female figurines into one of three broad contexts (Tomb site, Temple or Town), Pinch is able to plausibly assign a general votive

⁸⁵ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 225.

⁸⁶ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, Lists 1-6, 226-234.

⁸⁷ To cite just one example, Pinch lists the provenance of the 3+ figurines found at Aswan (Elephantine) by a 1906-1908 German expedition as “In houses,” when the excavation report clearly states, “Im Schutt, der in und über beiden Häusern lag, und auch in der Umgebung beider Häuser...wurden einige figürliche Terrakotten und Holzfiguren gefunden...”: Walter Honroth, O. Rubensohn, and F. Zucker. “Bericht über die Ausgrabungen auf Elephantine in den Jahren 1906-1908.” *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 46 (1909-1910) 30.

⁸⁸ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 230.

⁸⁹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 232.

⁹⁰ e.g. the “Artisans’ houses” listed under ‘Town’ for Thebes (Karnak): Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 229.

⁹¹ e.g. the Ramesseum: Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 232.

function to the figurines, since all three environments undoubtedly contained spaces for individual prayer.⁹² However, in doing this, Pinch circumvents the archaeologically documented fact that the majority of female figurines have been found in fragmentary condition⁹³ *in refuse deposits*, and only rarely intact in sacred locales like tombs or shrines.

Pinch's inaccurate system of noting female figurines' provenance, and her tendency to assume a primary context from a secondary one, prevent her from seeing for Egypt what has already been accepted by scholars of the ancient Near East: that "clay figurines and models revealed by excavation reflect patterns of disposal more often than they do patterns of use."⁹⁴ Pinch has therefore presented the figurine evidence in a manner which facilitates her votive-fertility reading, but which does not fully account for, nor adequately address, the actual archaeological context of Egyptian nude female figurines.

Archaeological context and the condition of excavated figurines must be taken seriously for this class of object. It will be shown that Egyptian nude female figurines of the New Kingdom and later, which are so often found broken and in refuse deposits, could have a use other than as votive fertility charms. Textual evidence, considered in detail in Chapter 3, reveals that female figurines of clay could be used in combination with magico-medical spells to both prevent and heal physical ailments, including those not exclusively in the realm of fecundity. This alternative – and complementary – function of Egyptian nude female figurines will be advanced and fully explicated in the chapters to follow.

A few remarks on the condition of excavated nude female figurines must be inserted here. As mentioned above, Geraldine Pinch largely ignores the quite obvious fact that the vast majority of her catalogued female figurines were recovered in a fragmentary state. She erroneously states that, "The way in which most of the votive objects...are broken suggests accidental damage," and while she concedes that, "[r]itual breakage cannot be entirely ruled out," Pinch still insists that "it was not a standard practice."⁹⁵ Because she is operating under the assumption that all female figurines were votive objects, and because she cannot locate texts

⁹² Emily Teeter, "Popular Worship in Ancient Egypt: Contrary to what is often written, commoners had access to their deities." *KMT* 4/2 (1993) 28-37.

⁹³ A major trait of excavated ceramic female figurines that is rarely mentioned in publications and to which I shall return presently; see below and Chapter 2.2.

⁹⁴ Moorey, *Ancient Near Eastern Terracottas*, 9, summarizing the work of Mary Voight in *Hajji Firuz Tepe, Iran: The Neolithic Settlement*. Philadelphia: The University Museum, 1983.

⁹⁵ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 341.

relating to the ritual breakage of votive offerings,⁹⁶ Pinch is able to dismiss the fragmentary figurines' condition (and extra-temple/tomb/house provenance) as a by-product of their having been "cleared out" of their original positions at a later date.⁹⁷

A simple glance at the published drawings and photographs of figurines referenced by Pinch reveals that the greater part of the objects – and particularly the early 18th Dynasty and later figurines – are fragmentary.⁹⁸ This also holds true for the majority of pharaonic period figurines published since Pinch's work appeared, as well as for the 42 newly-excavated Mut Precinct figurines, all of which were recovered in fragments. Furthermore, it must be emphasized that the preponderance of these figurines were not accidentally broken, but intentionally snapped, usually at torso level, which in many cases is their strongest structural point. Such patterns of breakage therefore cannot be the result of tossing, sweeping, or otherwise carelessly discarding the figurines, but must have been purposefully enacted.⁹⁹ This intentional breakage will be addressed in detail in the following chapter, but is yet another aspect of anthropomorphic ceramic figurines that been recognized for some time by scholars working with figures from the ancient Near East (and elsewhere), including Mary Voight,¹⁰⁰ P.R.S. Moorey,¹⁰¹ and Raz Kletter,¹⁰² whose experimental research revealed that female figurines of fired clay, when dropped from

⁹⁶ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 214, 341.

⁹⁷ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 23-25, 39-40, 47, 56-58, 67-8. Anna Stevens offers a similar explanation for the fragmentary female figurines from the Amarna Workmen's Village refuse deposits. After stating that, "The dump material...probably represents a mixture of the clearance of items, votive or similar, from the private chapels and the more piecemeal discard of items used within the village," she suggests that perhaps "the dumps were a secondary deposition point, the figurines having first been left somewhere that they were exposed to trample, such as a street space.": *Private Religion at Amarna*, 314.

⁹⁸ To cite just a few salient examples, see Bruyère's 1939 excavation report from Deir el-Medina, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Médineh (1934-5)*. Cairo: IFAO, 1939, figs. 58 and 59, and plates XLIII, XLIV, and XLV.

⁹⁹ That a corpus of excavated Egyptian female figurines exhibits intentional breakage at their least vulnerable locale, and that this breakage might have occurred at a moment of their use, was first noted by Jean Jacquet in *Karnak Nord IX*. Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 2001. 62, n.101.

¹⁰⁰ Voight, *Hajji Firuz Tepe, Iran: The Neolithic Settlement*. Philadelphia: The University Museum, 1983.

¹⁰¹ Moorey, *Ancient Near Eastern Terracottas in the Ashmolean Museum and Idols of the People: Miniature Images of Clay in the Ancient Near East*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

¹⁰² Raz Kletter, *The Judean Pillar-Figurines and the Archaeology of Asherah*. Oxford: Tempus Reparatum, 1996.

some height onto a hard surface to mimic accidental damage, exhibit patterns of breakage different than those visible on excavated Judean figures.¹⁰³

1.3 Typology of the Mut Precinct Female Figurines

As mentioned previously, fragments of baked clay female figurines have been found in nearly all of the areas of the Mut Precinct receiving attention from the Johns Hopkins Expedition, both *in situ* and in pottery baskets.¹⁰⁴ After four seasons of excavation, the total number of female figurines identifiable from their fragments is 42.¹⁰⁵

The Johns Hopkins Expedition is not the first mission to encounter fired clay female figurines at the Mut Temple precinct. Margaret Benson and Janet Gourlay appear to have found numerous female figurines while working at the site in the late 1890s – the “hideous little clay figures” mentioned in their book.¹⁰⁶ The Brooklyn Museum/Detroit Institute team has also excavated ceramic female figurines, primarily from the northwest area of the precinct where Ptolemaic and later domestic installations were found.¹⁰⁷ These figurines are being studied by Dr. Emily Teeter of the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago.¹⁰⁸

The Johns Hopkins Expedition has unearthed only one female figurine from the vicinity of the Mut Temple proper, and that from the area of the gateway at the west of the First Court (cat. no. 33). The majority of the Hopkins figurines have in fact been excavated from refuse zones associated with the industrial areas south of the Sacred Lake, with a single example coming from the Thutmoside gateway and enclosure wall zone. As noted above, such a provenance for fragments of ceramic female figurines is not surprising. Egyptian female figurines – along with other types of

¹⁰³ Moorey, *Idols of the People*, 66, reviewing Kletter, *The Judean Pillar-Figurines*, 55-56 and figs. 25-29.

¹⁰⁴ The identification of female figurines at the pottery analysis stage, rather than on site in the course of excavation, is common, as the figures often resemble mere sherds when uncovered. A similar situation has been noted at Memphis/Kom Rabi'a by Lisa Giddy: *The Survey of Memphis II: Kom Rabi'a: the New Kingdom and post-New Kingdom Objects*. London: EES, 1999. 5, 31.

¹⁰⁵ Trenches marked with a * in **Table 1** are those in which female figurines have been found; see catalogue (**Appendix A**) for all figurines.

¹⁰⁶ Benson and Gourlay, *The Temple of Mut in Asher*, 75-76; unfortunately, no figurines are illustrated in their publication.

¹⁰⁷ Richard A. Fazzini, personal communication, April 2004; Fazzini and Peck, “Excavating,” 19.

¹⁰⁸ See e.g. *Baked Clay Figurines and Votive Beds from Medinet Habu*. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2009.

portable objects identified as components of daily life – are commonly found in refuse zones at both temple and domestic sites.¹⁰⁹ This placement speaks not only to their patterns of disposal, but also to the significance they bore to their owners. These concepts have been eloquently discussed for Egyptian sites by Barry Kemp,¹¹⁰ and will be returned to in the following chapters.

A catalogue of the pharaonic period female figurines found by Johns Hopkins at the Mut Precinct between 2001 and 2004 can be found in **Appendix A**.¹¹¹ The material, measurements, method of manufacture, and provenance for each female figurine are included in the catalogue, together with a preliminary date for the object. The dates for the figurines are derived from their excavated context and/or from comparanda where necessary. It should be noted that the Johns Hopkins Expedition is an ongoing project, and future excavations may reveal more explicit information relating to the figurines' date and spatial distribution at the site. Thus, the information presented in this catalogue is intended to elucidate the number, variety, and temporal range of figurines uncovered from the site to date, as well as their state of preservation, in order to advance the thesis presented in the following chapters. Further remarks on the manufacture and distribution of the Mut Precinct figurines and similar objects can be found in Chapter 2.

W.M. F. Petrie made an early attempt at classifying pre-Roman Egyptian female figurines in the "Toys" chapter of his *Objects of Daily Use* (1927). Unfortunately, his system can no longer be employed as a useful typology. While Petrie identified four very broad classes of pottery "dolls," and correctly included them in a publication dedicated to items employed in everyday life, his study is too general and lacks in practicable dating criteria; much more precision is needed in order to classify and date the very wide range of female figurines utilized during the pharaonic period in Egypt. For example, Petrie's classes I, II and III clearly overlap, as is evident even from his own illustrations, and his dating of the figurines is

¹⁰⁹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 23-25, 39-40, 47, 56-58, 67, and the excavation reports cited on pp. 226-234; Barry J. Kemp, "The Amarna Workmen's Village in Retrospect." *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 73 (1987) 30; Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 13, 16, 31, 119, 139, 320-321; Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 314, 327.

¹¹⁰ Barry J. Kemp, "How Religious were the Ancient Egyptians?" *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 5 (1) (1995) 30-33 and fig. 3.

¹¹¹ The small number of figurines dating to the Graeco-Roman period have been excluded from this work, as they belong to a distinct historical and social milieu and are best reserved for a study of their own.

admittedly sketchy.¹¹² Today, it is the figurines illustrated in Petrie's study that remain its most valuable aspect.

The only true typology for ceramic female figurines of the early 18th Dynasty and later is the one presented in Chapter 2.6 of Geraldine Pinch's *Votive Offerings to Hathor*.¹¹³ However, because it was created to classify figurines found in sanctuaries of the goddess Hathor, and restricts its dating to the Middle and New Kingdoms, Pinch's typology cannot be wholly applied to the Mut Precinct figurines, some of which are certainly post-New Kingdom. In view of this, a new typology is provided here for the Mut Precinct figurines. This typology is likely to be applicable to figurines found elsewhere in the Karnak complex, as well as to those from the greater Theban area. It is also the first typology that includes detailed dating criteria for female figurines of the Third Intermediate and Late Periods.¹¹⁴

While no two of the Mut Precinct female figurines are alike, most fall into one of the six the types explicated below, indicating a uniformity of style for specific chronological periods.

1.3.1 Type 1

Type 1 figurines from the Mut Precinct are thus far represented at the site by a single example which was found in a largely disturbed area along the east face of the 18th Dynasty enclosure wall running southwards from the Thutmoside gateway (**Fig. 1**).¹¹⁵ However, this type of figurine – a handmade figure¹¹⁶ of a nude female fashioned out of marl clay – is well known from a range of sites, including temple, town and tomb environs in Upper and Lower Egypt, Nubia, and the galena mines of the Eastern Desert. Within the Karnak complex, numerous fragments of Type 1 figurines have

¹¹² *Objects of Daily Use, with over 1800 figures from University College*. London: British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1927. 60.

¹¹³ pp. 198-234.

¹¹⁴ Note that Teeter's recent publication, *Baked Clay Figurines and Votive Beds from Medinet Habu*, also includes a typology for Third Intermediate and Late Period female figurines.

¹¹⁵ It should be noted that in 2005, Elaine Sullivan uncovered at least one further example of a Type 1 female figurine during her excavations at the site. That figurine, the lower half of a female in marl clay, will be included in her discussion of the far south of the precinct (Elaine Sullivan, personal communication, August 2005).

¹¹⁶ That these figurines were handmade is clear to the Gebel Zeit excavators, who have recovered numerous figurines of this type: Georges Castel et al. "Découverte de mines pharaoniques au bord de la Mer Rouge" *Archéologia* 192-3 (July/Aug 1984) 48. My own observations of the Mut Precinct example suggest that it, too, was hand-modeled in the round (see Chapter 2).

been found at North Karnak.¹¹⁷ Several complete Type 1 figurines have been found in what appears to be a sacred context at Gebel Zeit.¹¹⁸

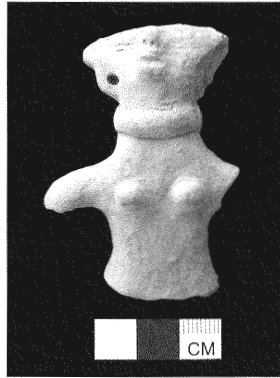


Fig. 1: Type 1 figurine from the Mut Precinct (cat. no. 1)

These figurines, when whole, depict a slender, nude female whose long legs taper to a point. On complete examples, the pubic triangle is incised, and the vulva sometimes indicated. The navel and occasionally the nipples may be marked by a small, circular impression, and can be surrounded by a ring of similar small punctures.¹¹⁹ Unfortunately, many of these features are lacking on the Mut Precinct figurine, which is broken clean through just above the navel, although the figure preserves small, well-proportioned breasts and a collar or necklace fashioned out of a roll of clay at the neck.

The heads of these figurines may be regarded as their most unique and identifying feature. The top of the head is flattened into a convex disc

¹¹⁷ Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, 62 and fig. 54: B 990, B 1152 and B 2282. These are just three of a number of Type 1 figurines excavated at North Karnak (Jean Jacquet and Helen Jacquet-Gordon, personal communication, January 2006). I am grateful to Dr. Jacquet and Dr. Jacquet-Gordon for discussing with me the many female figurines that they uncovered at North Karnak during an evening at Chicago House in January 2006.

¹¹⁸ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 202-203, 228-229; George Castel, Jean- François Gout, and Georges Soukiassian. "Fouilles de Gebel Zeit (Mer Rouge): Première et Deuxième Campagnes (1982-1983)." *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 70 (1984-85) 99-105; Georges Castel et al. "Gebel Zeit: Pharaonische Bergwerke an den Ufern des Roten Meeres." *Antike Welt* 16/3 (1985) 15-28.; Georges Castel and Georges Soukiassian. *Akten des vierten Internationalen Ägyptologen Kongresses München 1985*. Ed. Sylvia Schoske. Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, 1988-1991. 2: 161-170.

¹¹⁹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 291-202.

shape or what Petrie called a “shelving head,”¹²⁰ with perforations for the insertion of string and bead hair.¹²¹ A fringe of hair at the brow is indicated by impressions in the clay. The facial features of these Type 1 figurines are rendered as shallow, horizontal slits for eyebrows and eyes, a protruding bump of clay for the nose, often with two nostrils lightly indicated by very small depressions, and a deeper horizontal slit for the mouth. A jutting, round chin is also noticeable on the Mut Precinct figurine. The rather large ears of the figurines were modeled in clay and then pierced with a large, round implement for the insertion of jewelry. The Mut Precinct figurine preserves both of its pierced ears.

The full range of Type 1 figurines¹²² broadly date from the Middle Kingdom through the early 18th Dynasty.¹²³ However, the Mut Precinct example, even though it was found in a disturbed area, can be dated to the early 18th Dynasty if we apply some of Pinch’s iconographic dating criteria. With regard to figurines’ upper bodies, she assigns those lacking in body decoration (such as circular impressions around the breasts) and exhibiting a large disc that slopes upwards from the forehead to the latter part of the chronology.¹²⁴ Furthermore, a number of the securely excavated Gebel Zeit figurines constitute the closest comparanda for the Type 1 Mut figurine, and favor a similar date.¹²⁵ This Type 1 figurine is therefore the earliest dated female figurine fragment from the Johns Hopkins excavations, and is contemporary with the earliest known stone features of the temple.¹²⁶ Further remarks on the manufacture of this type of figurine will be made in Chapter 2.

While Pinch has collated more than 100 examples of this type of figurine from Hathoric sites across Egypt, her description of the objects’

¹²⁰ Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 60.

¹²¹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 202; William C. Hayes, *The Scepter of Egypt: a background for the study of the Egyptian antiquities in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*. Vol. II. New York: Harper in cooperation with the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1959. 17, fig. 6; Castel et al., “Gebel Zeit,” 19, fig. 7.

¹²² Discussed by Pinch as her Type 3: *Votive Offerings*, 201-203 and passim.

¹²³ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 203.

¹²⁴ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 203.

¹²⁵ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 203; Georges Castel, Jean- François Gout, and Georges Soukiassian. “Fouilles de Gebel Zeit (Mer Rouge): Première et Deuxième Campagnes (1982-1983). *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l’Égypte* 70 (1984-85) 104 and Pl. IV, 8; Paule Posener-Kriéger, “Les travaux de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale en 1984-1985.” *Bulletin de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale* 85 (1985) Pl. LXV.

¹²⁶ Fazzini, “Some Aspects,” 63, 72-75.

workmanship as “crude”¹²⁷ may not be warranted. Given that the figurines were hand-modeled and average just 20 centimeters in height when fully preserved,¹²⁸ the careful attention given to shaping and adorning these objects is quite remarkable. The Mut Precinct exemplar, consisting of the upper torso and head, is a well-proportioned human figurine exhibiting such fine details as the regularly-spaced, circular perforations at the back of the head for the insertion of artificial hair; a rippled fringe of hair indicated in clay along the brow line; two preserved ears with circular holes for what was likely metal jewelry;¹²⁹ nostril indications made by gently pressing a small, rounded implement into the bulge of clay that forms the nose; a clearly marked mouth and chin; and small, round, applied breasts. Examples of this type from the shrines at Gebel Zeit were also found wrapped in linen, wearing metal and faience jewelry, and with elaborate string and bead hair.¹³⁰ With so much meticulous detail present beyond the basic modeling of the clay, this type of figurine can hardly be considered ‘crude,’ and such subjective terminology is best avoided when discussing this type of object.

1.3.2 Type 2

Type 2 figurines are perhaps the most intriguing type of female figurine to come from the Johns Hopkins excavations at the Mut Temple precinct. They belong to another well-known genre of Egyptian female figurines, namely those depicting women lying on beds (**Fig. 2**). This type of figurine can occur in fired clay or limestone, and is most frequently linked to New Kingdom domestic sites like Amarna and Deir el-Medina.¹³¹ More specifically, however, this type has been recovered from domestic, workshop, and temple debris throughout the Nile Valley, as well as occurring in individual tombs.¹³²

¹²⁷ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 201.

¹²⁸ Jean Leclant and Gisèle Clerc. “Fouilles et travaux en Égypte et au Soudan, 1984-1985.” *Orientalia* 55 (1986) 296.

¹²⁹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 201.

¹³⁰ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 201; Castel et al. “Fouilles de Gebel Zeit,” 104.

¹³¹ Pinch, “Childbirth and Female Figurines,” 406-414; *Votive Offerings*, 207-209; Gay Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*. London: BM Press, 1993. 75-76; Florence D. Friedman, “Aspects of Domestic Life and Religion.” *Pharaoh’s Workers*. Ed. Leonard H. Lesko. New York: Cornell UP, 1994. 100; Lynn Meskell, *Private Life in New Kingdom Egypt*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2002. 73-74.

¹³² Pinch, “Childbirth and Female Figurines,” 400-414, and her Types 6b and 6c, *Votive Offerings*, 207-209, 232-233,



Fig. 2: Type 2 figurine from the Mut Precinct (cat. no. 2)

The figurine form of a woman lying on a bed – sometimes erroneously referred to as a “plaque,”¹³³ connoting a display function for the object that is not evident in the archaeological or textual record¹³⁴ – is also well documented in later periods, including the Ptolemaic.¹³⁵

¹³³ The “plaque” designation is especially popular with scholars of western Asia, and is most frequently employed in the phrase “Astarte plaque,” the term coined for a specific type of ceramic female figurine from Syro-Palestinian sites that depicts a standing female figure against a flat back panel (see Miriam Tadmor, “Female Cult Figurines in Late Canaan and Early Israel: Archaeological Evidence.” *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays: Papers Read at the International Symposium for Biblical Studies, Tokyo, 5-7, December, 1979*. Ed. Tomoo Ishida. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1982. 139-173). It occasionally serves as an incorrect designation for Egyptian women-on-a-bed figurines, and has been applied to other types of female figures as well, e.g. Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, pp.89-92, in which she uses the term as a descriptor for the very flat, schematic representations of females from the site, only adding to existing terminological confusion. We should bear in mind that the females represented on Egyptian figurines are rarely, if ever, to be regarded as standing (an exception may be some Ptolemaic period figurines with architectural features; see n.135 below) and thus the designation “plaque” should be avoided. In this work, all ceramic images of females, whether molded or handmade, and whether exhibiting a flat panel behind the figure or not, will be called “figurines,” and those intended to show women lying on beds will be specifically identified as such, following the example and remarks of Lisa Giddy in *The Survey of Memphis II: Kom Rabi’a: the New Kingdom and post-New Kingdom Objects*. London: EES, 1999. 28-42.

¹³⁴ There are no archaeological examples of Egyptian figurines depicting women on a bed having been found in a vertical position, despite some unfortunate efforts made by museums to restore and alter figurines so that they might be displayed upright (i.e. UC 8654 and 16757, to which flat plaster bases have been added: Angela P. Thomas, *Gurob: A New Kingdom Town*. Warminster: Aris & Philips, 1981. 82-83, cat. nos. 708-709). Most of these types of figurine, in fact, derive from domestic or temple refuse or tombs (Pinch,

Type 2 female figurines from the Mut Precinct currently number three, all of which were fashioned from Nile silt clay, and include some unique examples. All Type 2 figurines from the Mut Precinct have a molded top portion depicting a thin, nude woman lying on a rectangular bed with her arms hanging down at her sides. The females' pubic area is marked by a triangular indentation, and a shallow depression differentiates the arms from the torso, and the legs from one another. Traces of pigment in the hues of red, white and/or black can be seen on the figures.

On two of the Type 2 Mut Precinct figurines, a baby-like figure lies beside the woman.¹³⁶ One of these is likely an Amarna period example, found in two joining pieces in a large deposit of discarded New Kingdom pottery south of the outer enclosure wall during the 2003 season (**Fig. 2**).¹³⁷ Broken horizontally at the woman's thigh-level, the figurine is mold-made from Nile silt that has fired to an orange-brown tone. The upper part of the figurine shows a slender, nude female lying prostrate on a bed, her navel and pubic area clearly indicated, with an oblong pillow beneath her full, striated wig. Red paint is still visible on the woman's face; black pigment remains on her hair. From the lower portion of the figurine, we can observe that a baby of undetermined sex with an egg-shaped head lies in profile on the woman's left. The woman's arms rest against her sides, and the baby's arms hang downwards. Like most examples of this type of figurine where children are present, the baby on this Mut Temple figurine is naked, hairless, and long-limbed. However, unlike most figurines of bedded women on which children appear, here the baby is on the female's left.¹³⁸ Splotches of white material, possibly the remains of background pigment, are also visible on the woman's body and behind the baby's head and

Votive Offerings, 232-233) and were found cleanly broken across the middle, preventing their erection as complete monuments, at least in the last stage of their object life. Nor are there texts indicating that such objects should be displayed as plaques or other decorative objects. For texts calling for clay images of females, see Chapter 3.

¹³⁵ More rounded female bodies and architectural features such as columns or cornices added to the beds are notable features of Ptolemaic Type 2 female figurines, e.g. W.M.F. Petrie, *Memphis I*. London: School of archeology in Egypt, University College, 1909. Pl. XXXV and Redford et al. "The First Season of Excavations at Mendes." *The Journal of the Society of the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 18 (1988) 67, n.146 and Pl. XXII.

¹³⁶ These figures are interpreted as babies due to their diminutive size and their nudity, both typical of Egyptian representations of children: Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 209; Robins, *The Art of Ancient Egypt*, 72.

¹³⁷ Bryan, "Final Report on 2001-2004 Seasons at the Temple of Mut," 3-4.

¹³⁸ Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Médineh* (1934-5). Cairo: IFAO, 1939. 142; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 209; for other figurines with a baby on the female's left, see the comparanda listed in the catalogue (**Appendix A**).

neck.¹³⁹ On the underside of the figure, two indentations mark the position of handmade bed legs, now missing.

The second Type 2 female figurine from the Mut Precinct (cat. no. 3), also molded from Nile silt and fired to a light brown hue, is broken in two places: horizontally at the woman's lower belly, and somewhat jaggedly at her feet. The remaining portion of the figurine preserves the torso of a thin woman lying on a bed, her arms at her sides. Like the 18th Dynasty example above, red pigment is preserved on the woman's body, here on the left arm and left leg. The figurine is unfortunately broken in several places, including the bottom right corner, where a baby would likely have appeared.¹⁴⁰ The pottery assemblage associated with this figurine broadly dates from the New Kingdom to the Third Intermediate Period, but using comparative pieces,¹⁴¹ we can date this figurine to the New Kingdom.

The third Type 2 figurine from the Mut Precinct (**Fig. 3**) preserves one leg of the bed upon which the woman lies. Its top portion molded, the extant bed leg handmade, this figurine is also fashioned out of Nile silt, but unlike the above examples, the fabric has fired to a pinkish-gray tone. A vertical line of red paint can be seen on the female's left leg, running from the upper thigh to the ankle, and there are traces of red on the woman's left arm, on the left side of the bed, and on the underside of the bed as well. The remains of a white wash are also present on the top of the bed, on the outer portion of the preserved bed leg, and on the underside of the bed, perhaps again a base coat for the application of colored pigment(s).

¹³⁹ For more on the use of white pigment on the figurines, see section 2.2.

¹⁴⁰ Pinch, "Childbirth and Female Figurines," 409-410; *Votive Offerings*, 209.

¹⁴¹ e.g. EES 787: Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 36 and Pls. 9, 80. See catalogue (**Appendix A**).



Fig. 3: Type 2 female figurine from the Mut Precinct (cat. no. 4)

Broken at the woman's mid-section, this figurine fragment displays all the criteria for a Type 2 figurine: a thin woman lying flat on a bed, her pubic area clearly marked by a triangular depression, her arms hanging down at her sides. On her right side is a nude baby – obviously male – with limbs splayed and an erect phallus, which the woman touches with her right hand. As far as can be determined by the published evidence, this is a unique example of a figurine representing a woman grasping the phallus of the baby next to her. Male infants have been identified on at least one example of this type of figurine,¹⁴² and there are several instances in which the woman touches the head or hand of the child next to her,¹⁴³ but the gesture seen on the Mut Precinct figurine remains singular.

It is unfortunate that this striking figurine was found in Level 1 of what is believed to be an industrial or habitation area in the south of the temple precinct, and that its top portion, which would have contained more precise dating criteria such as the woman's wig or jewelry, is lost. The pottery from this area is mixed, and the context quite disturbed, so dating this figurine is, at the moment, challenging. However, the pottery used to make this figurine appears different than that of the New Kingdom examples described previously, and may indicate a later date for the object. For now, a provisional date of Third Intermediate Period has been proposed based on the differing surface hue of this third example, as well as comparanda, such

¹⁴² Pinch, "Childbirth and Female Figurines," Pl. 6 and *Votive Offerings*, 209.

¹⁴³ Pinch, "Childbirth of Female Figurines," Pl. 6; *Votive Offerings*, 209; Honroth, Rubensohn, and Zucker, "Bericht über die Ausgrabungen auf Elephantine in den Jahren 1906-1908." *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 46 (1909-1910) Abb. 8; Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Médineh* (1934-5). Cairo: IFAO, 1939. Pl. 44b.

as the two complete examples in fired clay published by Honroth et al. and excavated from Third Intermediate Period domestic refuse at Elephantine, both of which show a woman on a bed touching the head of a baby at her lower right with the tips of her fingers.¹⁴⁴

1.3.3 Type 3

Type 3 female figurines¹⁴⁵ are the best represented in the Johns Hopkins corpus. At least a dozen examples of this type have been recovered from trenches behind the Sacred Lake.¹⁴⁶ Type 3 figurines were molded in a half-mold out of Nile silt or marl clay, as their flat backs attest, with further details added before firing.

The most complete Type 3 figurine from the Mut Precinct derives from unit VIII G West VI West Extension 3 behind the Sacred Lake (**Fig. 4**). Intact from head to pubic area, the majority of bodily features specific to Type 3 figurines are preserved in this example. All remaining Type 3 figurines from the Mut Precinct are fragmentary and most are of the upper bodies of females, with horizontal breakage usually having occurred in the torso and/or neck region.



Fig. 4: Type 3 figurine from the Mut Precinct (cat. no. 6)

¹⁴⁴ Honroth, Rubensohn and Zucker, 30-31 and Abb. 8.

¹⁴⁵ Discussed by Petrie as his Class IV, "Massive flat forms of extreme coarseness, with the hands below the breasts.": *Objects of Daily Use*, 60.

¹⁴⁶ In January 2006, two further examples of Type 3 figurines were excavated from behind the Sacred Lake at the Mut Precinct. Both are of fired Nile silt and are fragmentary, displaying the breakage patterns typical of these figurines. They derive from units VIII G Central 12 and IX G West 17. The latter figurine appeared on the website of the Johns Hopkins Expedition the day it was found: <<http://www.jhu.edu/egypttoday/2006/pages/11806-2.html>>. Like several other figurines in the Mut Precinct corpus, this figurine was a surface find.

The top portions of Type 3 figurines can be described as follows: the female wears a heavy hairstyle or wig characterized by two thick lappets, which hang down below the shoulders. The figures all have a high forehead, and many have circular eyes, most in the form of appliqués, although one example sports oval gouges in the clay in anticipation of circular appliqués (cat. no. 11).¹⁴⁷ On another Type 3 example from the Mut Precinct, horizontal slits have been incised across the circular applied eyes to indicate pupils (cat. no. 8). Noses are indicated only by a bump of clay between the eyes, and mouths are not present.

The middle and lower portions of this type of figurine regularly consist of applied breasts low and centered on the torso, often just above a large, round, impressed or incised navel. One figurine retains a long arm made from a thin roll of clay, which crosses the torso beneath the breasts and appears to end in a fist (cat. no. 17). In most other examples, only fragments of outstretched upper arms remain. Two hands with fingers indicated are frequently present beneath the breasts and just above or parallel to the navel. Very wide hips, an incised pubic triangle and hairs, and a line delimiting the legs can also be observed. The legs taper to a rounded stump in our most complete lower body example (cat. no. 16).

This type of female figurine was made by pressing clay into an open mold, and smoothing the back either by hand or with a broad, flat instrument.¹⁴⁸ After the initial molding, bits of clay for the wig lappets, eyes, sometimes the arms, and the breasts were applied to the figure. In addition, a pointed tool was used on many figurines to incise details of the wig hairs, pubic triangle, legs, and in one case, the eyes. Several of the Mut Precinct Type 3 figurines have a significant amount of red paint remaining on their front surface, revealing a further treatment to the figurines after firing. More remarks on the manufacture and decoration of these figures will be made in Chapter 2.

One of the Mut Precinct Type 3 figurines appears to be from a New Kingdom context based on pottery analysis (cat. no. 8), but unfortunately, many other fragments of this type are from contexts that are difficult to

¹⁴⁷ Cf. UC 59326, where similar oval gouges form eye sockets into which circular clay eyes would have been applied. I am grateful to Dr. Stephen Quirke and the staff of the Petrie Museum for enabling me to see this and other ceramic figurines during my visit in May-June 2005.

¹⁴⁸ See the particularly smooth back of catalogue number 8 (**Appendix A**). This method of manufacture was also observed for the New Kingdom and post-New Kingdom female figurines found at Kom Rabi'a/Memphis by the EES: Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 30.

date. For example, most of the upper body fragments of Type 3 female figurines derive from a very large trash pit behind the inner enclosure wall consisting of mixed pottery ranging from Dynasties 18 to 26.¹⁴⁹ Comparanda from other sites, however, can assist us in dating this type of figurine.

The French excavations at North Karnak have uncovered significant numbers of female figurines both in and around the Thutmose I Treasury.¹⁵⁰ 94 female figurines were uncovered in excavations near the eastern enclosure wall of the Treasury, all of which were found above (i.e. later than) a sprawling mud brick structure designated Platform 90. Platform 90 effectively forms a break between the Second Intermediate Period and New Kingdom levels at this site, and has been dated to the reign of Hatshepsut by the excavators.¹⁵¹ This context has thus enabled the figurines from this location to be dated to the 18th Dynasty and later.

Although only a selection of the North Karnak female figurines have been published, we can see that three of the figures from the Platform 90 area are – not surprisingly – the best comparanda for the Mut Precinct Type 3 figurines.¹⁵² All three display some form of breakage, but are largely complete, and offer a picture of the lower bodies of these figurines that the Mut Precinct examples cannot: very broad hips, being the widest part of the figurine; heavy thighs; a large, symmetrical, incised pubic triangle with incised dots or short strokes for hairs; and an incised line to indicate the division between the legs. The North Karnak figurines also exhibit the head features described above for the Mut Temple figurines: a heavy wig with two thick lappets hanging down below the shoulders; incised hairs on the wig; applied, circular eyes; a bump for a nose; and the absence of a mouth. Figurine B155 from North Karnak also retains its right arm, a thin, rolled, applied piece of clay ending in a fist, very similar to catalogue number 17 from the Mut Precinct.

Several North Karnak figurines are also reported to have been painted with red ochre,¹⁵³ similar to the Mut Precinct examples referenced above. In addition, the majority of the North Karnak female figurines – like the majority of Mut Precinct figurines – are broken at torso level.¹⁵⁴ The significance of these details will be returned to in the following chapters.

¹⁴⁹ Unit VIII G Central 3: see above, section 1.1.1.6.

¹⁵⁰ Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*. Cairo: IFAO, 2001. 37-42, 62, and n.103.

¹⁵¹ Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, 37-42, 62.

¹⁵² Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, fig. 54: B.456, B.155, B.840.

¹⁵³ Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, 62.

¹⁵⁴ Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, 62 n.101.

The British Museum excavations at the site of el-Ashmunein in Middle Egypt have also uncovered Type 3 female figurines. There, in excavations covering approximately 490m² of area, fragments of nine pottery female figurines were found, most a domestic zone dating securely to the Third Intermediate Period.¹⁵⁵ Several of the Ashmunein figurines, notably numbers 172 and 173,¹⁵⁶ correspond exactly to the Mut figurines under discussion, and suggest a Third Intermediate Period date for at least some of the Mut Precinct figurines as well. Thus, it can be stated that a certain longevity – from the New Kingdom to the Third Intermediate Period or beginning of the Late Period (Dynasty 18-25/26) – seems to exist for Type 3 figurines from the Mut Precinct, with the later dates appearing likely for many of the examples.

Finally, it should be noted that the German Archaeological Institute team working at the Seti I mortuary temple at Gurna arrived at the same date range for the female figurines uncovered at that site. Using ceramic analysis, they report that their female figurines – whose exact numbers and findspots are not mentioned in the excavation publication, but which can be seen in the illustrations to closely resemble Type 3 Mut Precinct figurines – were fashioned from clay consistent with late New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period pottery.¹⁵⁷

1.3.4 Type 4

Type 4 figurines from the Mut Precinct, fashioned from Nile silt, are best identified by their pinched heads. Three examples of Type 4 figurines have been excavated by the Johns Hopkins Expedition, all from areas behind the Sacred Lake.

The best-preserved Type 4 figurine (**Fig. 5**) is complete from head to thighs, the lower legs having been snapped off at the ‘knee’ area. The figurine exhibits a pinched head with two indentations to suggest eye sockets and a bump resembling a nose. The figure has the remains of two arms projecting outwards from squared-off shoulders, and one extant breast. The body shape is curved at the lower torso, but not particularly well defined, with the hips being the widest part of the body. Unlike the vast majority of ceramic female figurines, neither the navel nor the pubic area on this example is marked in any way. Only the extant right breast and

¹⁵⁵ A. Jeffrey Spencer, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein vol. 3: The Town*. London: The Trustees of the British Museum/British Museum Press, 1983. 49-50, 38-39.

¹⁵⁶ Spencer, *Excavations*, Pl. 40 no. 172, 173.

¹⁵⁷ Karol Mysliwiec, *Keramik und Kleinfunde aus der Grabung im Tempel Sethos' I. in Gurna*. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag P. von Zabern, 1987. 181, Pl. 32

wide hips serve to identify the figure as female. This most complete example, despite its rough appearance, also has traces a white wash on its front. Its flat back indicates that its general form was molded in a half-mold.



Fig. 5: Type 4 figurine from the Mut Precinct (cat. no. 20)

The other two examples of this pinched head type from the Mut Precinct are broken cleanly and horizontally at the figures' waist level (cat. nos. 18 and 19). Both figurines have square shoulders below the pinched heads and thick necks, but the arms are not present on either, having been broken off, possibly deliberately. Two small breasts can be seen on each of these figurines, and a round, impressed navel is indicated on one. The flat, smooth bodies again suggest that these Type 4 figurines were mold-made, with the heads being summarily modeled by pinching a protrusion of clay between two fingers.

These Type 4 figurines from the Mut Precinct were found either as surface finds, or in the upper levels of trenches sited behind the Sacred Lake, making dating challenging, as mixtures of pottery and artifacts can occur at these top levels.¹⁵⁸ For example, while the Type 4 figurine from unit VIII G East 6 (cat. no. 18) was found in association with another female figurine that closely resembles a New Kingdom type (cat. no. 39),¹⁵⁹ the most complete Type 4 figurine (cat. no. 20, **Fig. 5** above) was found in association with Third Intermediate and Late Period ceramics.

Very few published comparanda exist for this type of female figurine. Petrie included one upper portion of a female figurine with a

¹⁵⁸ It is not unusual for fragments of female figurines to be churned up to the surface from earlier contexts; see the remarks of Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 4.

¹⁵⁹ Catalogue number 39 may be one of Pinch's Type 4, "the rarest of the...types," dating from the 18th-19th Dynasties: *Votive Offerings*, 204-205.

“much dwarfed and debased” head and circular clay appliqué for eyes in his *Objects of Daily Use*,¹⁶⁰ listing its provenance as “the N.W. corner of the Ramesseum, the 3rd gallery from the W. end.”¹⁶¹ Petrie dates this figurine to the 22nd Dynasty “both by the fabric”¹⁶² and on a false link with Babylonian figurines. However, this Third Intermediate date should be taken into consideration, as other ceramic female figurines found at that location can be dated to the same period.¹⁶³

A second comparative figurine, this time complete, was found in Third Intermediate Period domestic debris at Medinet Habu.¹⁶⁴ Here, the figurine consists of a pinched head with circular, applied eyes and a small patch of applied clay for hair at the brow. The body consists of stump-like arms coming off of squared shoulders, and a rather narrow torso with two applied breasts and a round, impressed navel. The torso gradually widens towards the hip area. Just at the hip and thigh area, a large pubic triangle is outlined, with incised dots used to render pubic hair. Another incised line creates a division between the legs, which end in a broken peg that may have once indicated rudimentary feet. This Medinet Habu example thus appears to have the pinched head criterion under discussion here for Type 4, as well as many of the appliqué and bodily features of my Type 3. These two types therefore appear to be related (and contemporaneous), sharing a body type, but exhibiting two very different renderings of the head. It is also possible that in some cases, what looks like a Type 4 “pinched head” figurine is actually a Type 3 figure minus its applied lappets. This may be the case with the Medinet Habu figure described above, although it does not appear to be the case with the Type 4 examples from the Mut Precinct. In light of the above comparanda, a provisional Third Intermediate-Late Period date for the Type 4 figurines from the Mut Precinct is proposed here, and their (thus far) exclusive appearance at Theban area temples noted.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ UC 29792: no.430: 60 and pl.52.

¹⁶¹ Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 60.

¹⁶² Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 60.

¹⁶³ The upper portion of a Type 3 figurine, discussed above as ranging in date from the New Kingdom to the Third Intermediate Period, was also found at the Ramesseum: James E. Quibell, *The Ramesseum*. London: Bernard Quaritch, 1898. no.6: Pl. XXXA.

¹⁶⁴ Cairo JE59693: Uvo Hölscher, *Post-Ramessid Remains. The Excavation of Medinet Habu V*. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1954. 58 and pl. 34C; Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, 91-92.

¹⁶⁵ Female figurines with pinched heads have also been recovered from North Karnak: Helen Jacquet-Gordon, personal communication, January 2006.

1.3.5 *Type 5*

Type 5 figurines from the Mut Precinct in some ways also resemble Type 3 (and 4) figurines, and may in fact be derived from them. However, it is their flat, thin bodies and smooth finished appearance that distinguish them from the thicker and somewhat rougher Type 3 figurines.



Fig. 6: Type 5 figurine from the Mut Precinct (cat. no. 24)

Fragments of at least seven Type 5 figurines have been recovered by Johns Hopkins at the Mut Precinct, predominantly from the VIII G East industrial zone behind the Sacred Lake. They are all portions of the torsos and lower bodies of females. Type 5 figurines exhibit perfectly circular navels centered on the body below the breasts, and no hands can be seen on any of the Type 5 figurines from the Mut Precinct.

The waists and hips of Type 5 figurines are narrower and less exaggerated than those of Type 3 figurines. The pubic area of Type 5 figurines consists of a neatly incised, symmetrical, and well-proportioned triangle approximately 1 cm below the navel, with small, circular incised dots used to indicate pubic hair. On our most complete example (**Fig. 6**), two parallel, incised lines are used to form a division between the legs as they taper to a point. The vulva may also be indicated on this figurine where the outline of the pubic triangle meets the lines dividing the legs.

All of the Type 5 figurines were molded in a half-mold from Nile silt and smoothed along the back by a blunt instrument. However, as mentioned above, it is the streamlined appearance of these figurines, rather than their iconography or method of manufacture, that is a major criterion for this type. Dr. Helen Jacquet-Gordon, on a visit to the Johns Hopkins

Expedition at the Mut Precinct in 2002, alerted the team to this fact.¹⁶⁶ She dates this type of figurine, which she aptly refers to as having a “pancake” form, to the Late Period, between Dynasties 26 and 30.¹⁶⁷ This dating is consistent with the date of pottery sherds excavated with the VIII G East figurines, the latest of which date to Dynasty 26.¹⁶⁸

1.3.6 Type 6

Type 6 figurines from the Mut Precinct are all lower bodies of females (**Fig. 7**), and what their upper bodies may have looked like cannot currently be conjectured from the Hopkins corpus. Furthermore, no definite comparative pieces for this type have been identified to date, making this a previously unrecorded category, although examples from other sites must surely exist. Since 2001, five examples of Type 6 female figurines have been recovered by Johns Hopkins from the Mut Precinct.

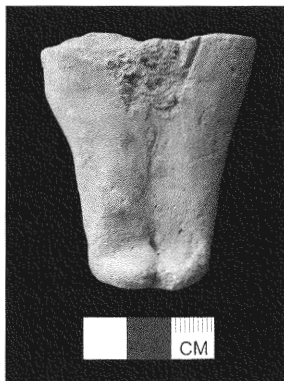


Fig. 7: Type 6 figurine from the Mut Precinct (cat. no. 30)

Type 6 female figurines are notable for their representation of feet, for the majority of female figurine types tend to narrow to a point beyond the thighs and end in a rounded stump. A second prominent feature of Type 6 figurines is an exaggerated pubic triangle, often reaching down to what would be knee-level of a regularly proportioned human figure. Additionally,

¹⁶⁶ The Johns Hopkins Expedition is indebted to both Dr. Jacquet-Gordon and Dr. Jean Jacquet for this and all of the insights that they have shared with us during their visits to the Mut Precinct. I am also grateful for the careful recording and detailed illustrations done by the 2002 VIII G East square supervisors, JJ Shirley and Fatma Ismail.

¹⁶⁷ Excavators' notebook for VIII G East 2 and 3, notes from January 27, 2002.

¹⁶⁸ Excavators' notebook for VIII G East 2 and 3, notes from January 27, 2002; Bryan, “2006 Report on the Johns Hopkins University Excavations at the Mut Temple,” 1.

these Type 6 figurines appear to be the smallest-sized female figurines from the Mut Precinct, with an average height of just six centimeters from foot to upper pubic area.

Fashioned from Nile silt, the lumpy, rough appearance of a number of the Type 6 figurines suggests that at least two were hand modeled,¹⁶⁹ although others display the smooth backs characteristic of molded figurines. Details like the line demarcating the legs, the outline of the extremely large pubic triangle, and the pubic hairs, were roughly incised after the figurine's initial shaping with a sharp, pointed instrument, although in one case, all that remains of the pubic area – or possibly all that was ever indicated – is three small dots. In two cases, the line creating the division between the legs and feet continues onto the back of the figurine.

The pottery associated with these figurines, the majority of which were found behind the Sacred Lake, suggests a Late Period (Dynasty 26) date for this type. However, in the absence of known comparanda, the Late Period date for Type 6 figurines must remain provisional and subject to re-evaluation should further excavated examples come to light.

1.3.7 *Unassigned*

The remaining ceramic female figurines from the Mut Precinct cannot yet be assigned to a specific, well-represented type at the site. This is in some cases due to the figurines' fragmentary nature, which prohibits their identification as a known type. In other cases, the singularity of the figurines prevents them from being designated as a 'type.' However, all pharaonic figurines excavated between 2001 and 2004 from the Mut Precinct have been included in the catalogue, and it should be emphasized that like the majority of the examples included in the typology above, every one of the unassigned figurines appears to exhibit intentional breakage.

¹⁶⁹ Figurines VIII G Central 2 Level 2 1/8/03 and IX G West 4 Level 3 1/12/04 (cat. nos. 30 and 31) have particularly rough fronts and backs.

TABLE 1

JHU Expedition to the Precinct of Mut at Karnak

2001-2004 Excavation Trenches

*= figurine found in this trench

Year	Trench	Figurine(s)
2001	VII H Center East TIII Gateway Square 1	
	VII H Center TIII Gateway Interior	
	VII H Center East TIII Gateway Square 2	
	VII H Center Front TIII Gateway	
	Area before the in situ Sakhmets	
	Sakhmet Square 2	
	Gateway Clearance	
	N(1)	
	N2	
	W1	
	S1	*
	VIII G South East (renamed VIII G East (1) in 2002)	
	VIII G South West (renamed VIII G Central (1) in 2002)	
2002	VII H Center E. TIII Gateway	
	W2	
	VIII G West (I)	

Year	Trench	Figurine(s)
2002	VIII G West II	
	VIII G West III	
	Test Trench A	
	Test Trench B	
	Test Trench C	*
	VIII G East (1)	
	VIII G East 2	**
	VIII G East 3	***
	VIII G East Pottery Trench	
	Second Court	
	Ramesses III Temple (Temple C) Rear W. Main	*
2003	VII H Center SE TIII Gateway	
	VI G	
	VIII G West 3 W. Extension	
	VIII G West IVA	*
	VIII G West IVA North Extension	
	VIII G West IVA North Extension 2	
	VIII G West IVA West Extension	
	VIII G West VB	**

Year	Trench	Figurine(s)
2003	VIII G West VI	
	VIII G West VI N. Extension A	
	VIII G West VI N. Extension B	*
	VIII G West VI West Extension	
	VIII G West VI West Extension 2	*
	VIII G West VI West Extension 3	**
	VIII G West 7	
	VIII G West 8 Western half	*
	VIII G West 9	
	VIII G Central 1	
	VIII G Central 2	**
	VIII G East III (continued from 2002)	
	VIII G East IV	
	Second Court	
	Ramesses III Temple Hypostyle Hall	*
2004	VII H Center South TIII Gateway Extension 1	*
	Second Court Platform	
	VIII G West 9	
	VIII G West 11	

Year	Trench	Figurine(s)
2004	VIII G West 12A	**
	VIII G Central 3 East Extension	*****
	VIII G Central 4	
	VIII G Central 5	
	VIII G Central 6	*
	VIII G East 5	*
	VIII G East 6	***
	IX G West Surface	*
	IX G West 1	
	IX G West 2	*
	IX G West 3	***
	IX G. West 4	
	IX G West 5	**
	IX G West 6	*
	IX G West Ceramic Trench	*

2 MATERIALS AND MANUFACTURE OF FEMALE FIGURINES

“Technological style, as the manner of how people carry out their work, includes the choices made by artists regarding materials and techniques of production, and how those choices are related to the appearance and function of the product. Human beliefs, ideas, and views of the world are often reflected in technological choices; such choices are not exclusively a reflection of utilitarian and economic factors. A technical study can therefore be one way of reading art for what it says about the producers, products, and patrons.”¹⁷⁰

2.1 Introduction to the Technical Study

This chapter is devoted to a detailed, non-destructive examination of the Mut Precinct female figurines and the identification of the materials and technology used in manufacturing them, with the hopes of determining as closely as possible who made the figurines, how they made them, and how the figurines were distributed and used once complete. Such a study has yet to be performed on this class of objects.¹⁷¹ However, it is now understood that anthropomorphic figurines “encode important cognitive elements in the modeling and representations of the human form”¹⁷² and it is these cognitive elements, embedded in the materials and forms of female figurines, that can bring us closer to a complete understanding of a the objects, even when primary context is lacking.

While extensive effort has been and continues to be put into classification systems for Egyptian pottery fabrics, with the Vienna System being the current standard,¹⁷³ the available data from these ceramic studies

¹⁷⁰ Chandra L. and Terry J. Reedy, “Relating Visual and Technological Styles in Tibetan Sculpture Analysis.” *World Archaeology* 25 (3) (1994) 304-305; see also Rita P. Wright, “Technology, Gender, and Class: Worlds of Difference in Ur III Mesopotamia.” *Gender and Archaeology*. Ed. Rita P. Wright. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996. 79-85.

¹⁷¹ Anna Stevens discusses the manufacture and decoration of female figurines from Amarna at various points in her book, particularly in the context of a broader study of the manufacture of religious items at the site, but does not delve into the same detail as here (*Private Religion at Amarna*, 85-88, 92-93, 259-269, 282). For obvious reasons, her discussion is also limited to figurines of New Kingdom type and date. For technical studies of related bodies of ceramic material, see: Janine Bourriau, “Pottery Figure Vases of the New Kingdom.” *Cahiers de céramique égyptienne* 1 (1987) 81-96; Peter F. Dorman, *Faces in Clay: technique, imagery, and allusion in a corpus of ceramic sculpture from Ancient Egypt*. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag P. von Zabern, 2002; Kasia Szpakowska, “Playing with Fire: Initial Observations on the Religious Uses of Clay Cobras from Amarna.” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 40 (2003) 113-122.

¹⁷² “Viewpoint: Can We Interpret Figurines?” *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 6 (2) (1996) 281.

¹⁷³ Drafted in 1980, the system is outlined in Hans-Åke Nordström, “Ton.” *Lexikon der*

has rarely been applied to anthropomorphic figurines.¹⁷⁴ Indeed, the vast majority of publications dealing with Egyptian female figurines – from the early studies of W.M.F. Petrie¹⁷⁵ to Geraldine Pinch's recent monograph,¹⁷⁶ as well as site reports, art texts, and museum catalogues – shy away from technical assessments of the objects, and tend to provide only summary details about the figurines' manufacture. A figurine's material is often generally identified as 'clay' (or 'pottery'), although this can now be narrowed down quite significantly, and the oft-labeled 'crude' or 'rude' formation process reduced to modeling or molding without further comment.¹⁷⁷ A close look at the many and varied embellishments made to Egyptian ceramic female figurines beyond the basic modeling of the clay, however, reveals that these figurines are the products of a multi-stage manufacturing process that likely took place within a workshop setting, and should hardly be considered 'crude.'

Fortunately, recent excavation reports such as Lisa Giddy's *The Survey of Memphis II: Kom Rabi'a* (1999) are beginning to include a broader range of technical details about their small finds. This chapter aims to continue this trend by providing the most complete and up-to-date assessment possible of the materials and technology used in manufacturing the Johns Hopkins ceramic female figurines, with the same information being presented in condensed form in the catalogue (**Appendix A**).

Ägyptologie. Eds. Wolfgang Helck and Eberhard Otto. 7 vols. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1975-1992. VI: 633-634, and published in Hans-Åke Nordström and Janine Bourriau, "Ceramic Technology: Clays and Fabrics," Fascicle 2 of Dorothea Arnold and Janine Bourriau, eds. *An Introduction to Ancient Egyptian Pottery*. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag P. von Zabern, 1993. 168-182. The Vienna System is applicable to both pre- and post-New Kingdom pottery: David A. Aston, *Egyptian Pottery of the Late New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period (twelfth - seventh centuries BC): tentative footsteps in a forbidding terrain*. Heidelberg: Heidelberger Orientverlag, 1996. 4ff.

¹⁷⁴ Although positive steps in the right direction can be found in Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 24-30 and in Szpakowska, "Playing with Fire," 117-118.

¹⁷⁵ i.e. *Objects of Daily Use, with over 1800 figures from University College*. London: British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1927; *The Funeral Furniture of Egypt*. London: British School of Archaeology, 1937.

¹⁷⁶ *Votive Offerings to Hathor*. Oxford: Griffith Institute/Ashmolean Museum, 1993.

¹⁷⁷ For example, Pinch does not differentiate between Nile silt or marl clay in her discussion of 'fertility figurines' and their manufacture (*Votive Offerings*, 198-236, 330-332). The Gebel Zeit excavators also do not assign a fabric type to their excavated figurines, although their descriptions of the material as "terre cuite rose," "terre cuite rose-jaune," "terre cuite verte," etc. strongly suggest that the majority, if not all, of the Gebel Zeit female figurines are fashioned from marl clay as outlined in the Vienna System; see Peter Mey, with Georges Castel and Jean-Claude Goyon, "Installations Rupestres du Moyen et du Nouvel Empire au Gebel Zeit." *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 36 (1980) 310-314.

Additional benefits to this technological study, beyond identifying as specifically as possible the materials and techniques used in manufacturing the figurines and the craftsmen who fashioned them, are that standardization of female figurines within chronological periods can be observed, and the geographical distribution of figurines similar to the Mut Precinct types will become apparent. Furthermore, the ritual function of ceramic female figurines like the Mut Precinct examples becomes evident when the symbolic associations of their materials are explored.

2.2 Manufacture of the Figurines

2.2.1 Clay

The two most common raw materials of ancient Egyptian pottery manufacture are Nile silt clay and marl clay.¹⁷⁸ Both clay types were readily employed in the Nile Valley throughout the pharaonic period.¹⁷⁹ The vast majority of the ceramic female figurines recovered by Johns Hopkins from the Mut Precinct were fashioned from Nile silt clay, which can be identified as Nile B2 of the Vienna System.¹⁸⁰ Only five of the 42 pharaonic period figurines under study here occur in marl clay.¹⁸¹ Figurine VII H Center E. TIII Gateway (cat. no. 1) is likely Marl A2 of the Vienna System, and VIII G West VI N. extension B 1.25.03 (cat. no. 35) appears to

¹⁷⁸ Janine D. Bourriau, Paul T. Nicholson and Pamela J. Rose, "Pottery." *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*. Eds. Paul T. Nicholson and Ian Shaw. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000. 121; Nordström and Bourriau, "Ceramic Technology: Clays and Fabrics," 157. The Egyptian terms for these materials will be discussed briefly in section 2.4 and in Chapter 3.

¹⁷⁹ Colin A. Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 2nd edition. Princes Risborough, UK: Shire Publications Ltd., 2001. 10; Nordström and Bourriau, "Ceramic Technology: Clays and Fabrics," 160-161.

¹⁸⁰ Nordström and Bourriau, "Ceramic Technology: Clays and Fabrics," 171-173; Aston, *Egyptian Pottery of the Late New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period*, 6; Lisa Giddy reports (*The Survey of Memphis II*, 13, 29) that all ceramic female figurines excavated by the EES from the New Kingdom and later strata at Memphis/Kom Rabi'a were fashioned from Nile B2 (called G1 at that site: Janine D. Bourriau, L.M.V. Smith and P.T. Nicholson, *New Kingdom Pottery Fabrics: Nile and mixed Nile/Marl clay fabrics from Memphis and Amarna*. London: Egypt Exploration Society, 2000. 6-8). However, she also states that, "except for the one pottery figurine EES 2899...the female figurines are all of the same clay fabric" (28). It seems that this figurine, no. 2899, should be of marl clay, based on the many parallels from Gebel Zeit and elsewhere. Kasia Szpakowska has also proposed Nile B2 as the fabric of the two fired clay cobra figurines featured in "Playing with Fire," 117.

¹⁸¹ See catalogue (**Appendix A**). We can also note that in 2005, the lower half of a Type 1 female figure of marl clay was found during excavations at the far south of the precinct (Elaine Sullivan, personal communication).

be Marl A4.¹⁸² The exact fabric of the remaining marl figurines has not yet been identified with certainty (see catalogue, **Appendix A**).

2.2.2 *Shaping*

The preponderance of Johns Hopkins female figurines were shaped by pressing moist clay into an open or half mold, resulting in the front of the figurine being molded and the back hand-smoothed, often by scraping with a blunt instrument.¹⁸³ This technique is most apparent when viewing the rear of the figurines, particularly the Type 3's.¹⁸⁴ The figurines from the Mut Precinct most readily identifiable as handmade are the singular Type 1 figurine, and several of the Type 6 figurines. The bed legs of two Type 2 figurines also appear to have been handmade.¹⁸⁵ Given these statistics, it can be stated that the most common material for this corpus of figurines is Nile silt clay (Nile B2), and that the most frequent method of shaping is molding in a half mold. The choice of Nile silt for the figurines may have been made not only because of its relative availability to potters, but also for its tendency to fire to a reddish-brown hue.¹⁸⁶ As will be shown below, red was the preferred coloration for fired clay female figurines of the New Kingdom through Late Period, and bore with it symbolism integral to the function of the figures.

The method used in shaping nude female figurines is in itself a dating criterion. Ceramic half molds for rings, amulets, shabtis, and other small objects came into use in the New Kingdom and continued into the Graeco-Roman period.¹⁸⁷ In her study of pottery figure vases, Janine Bourriau dates the incorporation of mold-made elements into ceramic vessels to between the beginning of the 18th Dynasty and the reign of

¹⁸² Nordström and Bourriau, "Ceramic Technology: Clays and Fabrics," 176-178; Aston, *Egyptian Pottery of the Late New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period*, 7-8.

¹⁸³ The Memphis/Kom Rabi'a figurines were also made in this way; traces of the scraping instrument are visible on four of those examples: Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 30.

¹⁸⁴ See the back views of catalogue numbers 8 and 10 in **Appendix A**.

¹⁸⁵ Catalogue numbers 2 and 4 in **Appendix A**.

¹⁸⁶ Alfred Lucas, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries*, 4th edition, rev. J.R. Harris. London: Edward Arnold, 1962. 376-377, 384; Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 10.

¹⁸⁷ Paul T. Nicholson, *Egyptian Faience and Glass*. Princes Risborough, UK: Shire Publications Ltd., 1993. 29; Harry M. Stewart, *Egyptian Shabtis*. Princes Risborough, UK: Shire Publications Ltd., 1995. 42-43; Florence D. Friedman, ed. *Gifts of the Nile: ancient Egyptian Faience*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1998. 60.

Thutmose III.¹⁸⁸ It logically follows that mold-made anthropomorphic figurines first appear during this time period as well.¹⁸⁹ Therefore, it is not surprising that our earliest-dated figurine, the Type 1 example, which belongs to a sequence of figurines dating from the Middle Kingdom to the early 18th Dynasty, is a handmade type, while the majority of later figurines from the Mut Precinct (Types 2-5 and the unassigned figurines) were shaped in half molds.

At this juncture, neither molds for female figurines, nor unfired figurines,¹⁹⁰ have been found by the Johns Hopkins Expedition to the Mut Precinct. However, kilns,¹⁹¹ slag, and pottery wasters, as well as ceramic molds for faience shabtis and amulets, have been uncovered in the industrial zone behind the Sacred Lake, and span the same chronological range as the female figurines.¹⁹² It is tempting to hypothesize from this evidence that female figurines were produced, as well as discarded, within the Mut Precinct, especially when one considers the recent suggestion that faience, glass, and pottery objects could all be manufactured using the same type of kiln¹⁹³ or, at the very least, were produced in close proximity to one

¹⁸⁸ Janine Bourriau, "Pottery Figure Vases of the New Kingdom." *Cahiers de céramique égyptienne* 1 (1987) 81; stylized female forms, which anticipate the nude female figurines to follow, also originate on pottery in the Near East: P.R.S. Moorey, *Idols of the People: Miniature Images of Clay in the Ancient Near East*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. 26.

¹⁸⁹ Pascale Ballet, "Potiers et fabricants de figurines dans l'Égypte ancienne." *Cahiers de céramique égyptienne* 4 (1996) 115; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 204-209; Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 27.

¹⁹⁰ A portion of an unfired female figurine (object 8902) was found in unit D3 [3713] of pottery workshop Q48.4 at Amarna, together with five unfired clay vessel sherds, an alabaster vessel, and another unfired clay figurine representing a lion or a sphinx: Pamela J. Rose, "Report on the 1987 Excavations. The Evidence for Pottery Making." Barry J. Kemp, comp. *Amarna Reports V*. London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1989. 90, n.4; Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 261.

¹⁹¹ The clearest examples being from square VIII G Central 2: excavators' notebook for VIII G Central 2, January 13-15, 2003.

¹⁹² Elizabeth A. Waraksa, "Female Figurines from the Mut Temple: An Introduction." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Research Center in Egypt. Tucson, Arizona, April 2004, 8; Betsy M. Bryan, "Report on 2003 Season at the Temple of Mut," 2-3.

¹⁹³ Paul T. Nicholson, "Industrial Archaeology at Amarna." *Egyptian Archaeology* 7 (1995) 16; Nicholson, "Materials and technology." *Gifts of the Nile: Ancient Egyptian Faience*, 60; Nicholson, "The Pottery Workshop at Q48.4 at Tell el-Amarna." *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 3 (1992) 67; Andrew J. Shortland, Paul T. Nicholson and Caroline Jackson, "Glass and faience at Amarna: different methods of both supply for production, and subsequent distribution." *The Social Context of Technological Change: Egypt and the Near East, 1650-1550 BC*. Ed. Andrew J. Shortland. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2001. 150.

another.¹⁹⁴ However, further excavation is needed to confirm this hypothesis. For a general indication of the size and appearance of the ceramic molds that would have been used to form the Mut Precinct figurines, one can turn to the excavated examples from Deir el-Medina,¹⁹⁵ Amarna,¹⁹⁶ and Hermopolis.¹⁹⁷

Molding of figurines can be regarded as a more complex method of manufacture than hand modeling, as well as a means of producing large quantities of objects of similar dimensions and appearance.¹⁹⁸ The high incidence of molded figurines of the same general types found at the Mut Precinct and other contemporary sites¹⁹⁹ allows us to dismiss the notions that these types of female figurines were hand-fashioned by technologically inexperienced individuals (i.e. commoners/non-craftsmen),²⁰⁰ or that figurines were spontaneously created by their users only when the need arose. What is instead likely is that figurines were produced in existing pottery workshops in order to supply local persons with these quite

¹⁹⁴ Shortland, Nicholson and Jackson, "Glass and faience at Amarna," 150.

¹⁹⁵ Bernard Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Médineh (1934-5)*. Cairo: IFAO, 1939. 214.

¹⁹⁶ Ashmolean Museum 1931.504 from T36.96 in the North Suburb: Amarna small finds database no. 30/431 <http://www.amarnaproject.com/pages/recent_projects/material_culture/small_finds/database.shtml>; Henri Frankfort and J.D.S. Pendlebury. *The City of Akhenaten II*. London, 1933. 57; Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 263; and object no. 11/12/2005 from N.48.18 in the Main City: Ludwig Borchardt and Herbert Ricke, *Die Wohnhäuser in Tell el-Amarna*. Berlin: Mann, 1980. 176; Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 263.

¹⁹⁷ Günter Roeder, *Vorläufiger Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Hermopolis 1929-1930*. Hildesheim: Überreicht von der Deutschen Hermopolis-Expedition: Versandt durch das Pelizaeus-Museum, 1931. 112, pl. XXVe; Roeder, *Hermopolis 1929-1939. Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Hermopolis-Expedition in Hermopolis, Ober-Ägypten, in Verbindung mit zahlreichen Mitarbeitern*. Hildesheim: Verlag Gebrüder Gerstenberg, 1959. 309, pl. 76.

¹⁹⁸ Ann C. Gunter, "Material, Technology, and Techniques in Artistic Production." *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Ed. Jack M. Sasson. New York: Scribner, 1995. III: 1541.

¹⁹⁹ i.e. North Karnak, Amarna, Deir el-Medina, Medinet Habu, and Memphis; see Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, 62 and fig. 54; Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 85; Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Médineh (1934-5)*, 139 fig. 58, 142 fig. 59 and pl. XLIII-XLV; Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines* 7, n.11 and passim; Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 28-42 and pl. 7-12, 80-81.

²⁰⁰ Also noted by Pinch for her standardized, Type 3 handmade figures, *Votive Offerings*, 330: "More variation might be expected if the donors made such objects." The same conclusion has been drawn for another corpus of well-studied Near Eastern ceramic figures, the molded Judean Pillar Figurines: Raz Kletter, *The Judean Pillar-Figurines and the Archaeology of Asherah*. Oxford: Tempus Reparatum, 1996. 50.

standardized objects. Further remarks on the standardization of figurines will be made below in section 2.3.

In a study utilizing the available archaeological remains of Egyptian pottery ateliers, Pascale Ballet has proposed that it was that it was potters, as distinguished from more specialized craftsmen like sculptors, who created anthropomorphic figurines like those found at the Mut Precinct.²⁰¹ She has determined that at Old Kingdom 'Ayn Asil and Graeco-Roman Memphis, both the general pottery and the figurines produced at the site shared similar kinds of fabrics.²⁰² She concludes that figurine making, "s'agit d'une partie constitutive des activités des potiers."²⁰³

Peter Dorman concurs with Ballet, adding to her study two further sites that show simultaneous production of ceramic vessels and figurines.²⁰⁴ The Q48.4 workshop at Amarna should also be added to this list.²⁰⁵ Dorman remarks that on a technical level, nude female figurines "display little evidence of the hand of a craftsman other than the potter who prepared the fabric," and asserts that "no one but a pottery technician is required for this type of production."²⁰⁶ The same conclusion has been reached for Bronze Age ceramic female figurines from neighboring regions.²⁰⁷

While the archaeological evidence cited by Ballet, Dorman and Stevens certainly points to potters as the manufacturers of ceramic female figurines, a close technical evaluation of the Mut Precinct figures reveals that there are additional reasons to believe that potters were the producers of such objects. Beyond being made of similar fabrics, Egyptian ceramic vessels and female figurines share a number of specific techniques of production and decoration, which will be elucidated throughout this chapter.

Following the initial shaping of the figure, but before being fired, a number of the Hopkins-excavated female figurines received further treatment. These added details will be explicated presently, and will enable the figurines to be compared on a technical level with similarly-made

²⁰¹ Ballet, "Potiers et fabricants," 113-122.

²⁰² Ballet, "Potiers et fabricants," 114, 117.

²⁰³ Ballet, "Potiers et fabricants," 114.

²⁰⁴ Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 29 n.162.

²⁰⁵ Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 260-7.

²⁰⁶ Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 27.

²⁰⁷ Moorey, *Idols of the People*, 38; A. Pruss, "Patterns of Distribution: How Terracotta Figurines were traded." *Transeuphratène* 19 (2000) 57.

objects from throughout Egypt. The embellishments made to the hand-modeled figurines (Types 1 and 6) will be discussed first.

2.2.3 *Incising*

The most frequently observed additions to the handmade female figurines are incised details made with a thin, pointed tool. This tool may have been a sturdy reed, or a bone, ivory, wood, or metal implement.²⁰⁸

The Type 1 figurine from the Mut Precinct (cat. no. 1, **Fig. 1** above) preserves a number of incised details and perforations. A rounded tool was pressed into the wet clay of the forehead to create a ridged hairline, and a light scraping technique was used to create the parallel horizontal lines delineating each eye and eyebrow. The pointed end of the tool was also lightly pressed into the clay at the bottom of the nose, leaving two round indentations for the nostrils. A deeper, horizontal notch indicates the mouth. A round, tubular tool was used to make the circular perforations in the modeled ears, and a similar but thinner tool was pushed through the disc-shaped head to create the holes for the stringing of hair. No incised markings appear on the upper torso of the Type 1 figurine, a fact that has been used as an iconographic dating criterion.

Although further decoration is not preserved, it is important to note that in its most complete phase of object life, the Type 1 figurine from the Mut Precinct was in all likelihood bedecked with metal and/or faience jewelry, and would have sported hair, and perhaps also wrappings, made from organic materials. Judging from the comparative Gebel Zeit figurines, metal, hooped earrings likely adorned the figure's pierced ears, strands of hair fashioned from linen and adorned with clay or faience beads would have been threaded through the perforations at the back of the head, and the entire figurine may have been draped with necklaces or girdles of faience jewelry and in some circumstances, wrapped in a piece of fringed, colored linen (see **Fig. 8**).²⁰⁹ The related textual evidence, to be discussed in

²⁰⁸ Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 23; Dorothea Arnold, "Techniques and Traditions of Manufacture in the Pottery of Ancient Egypt," Fascicle 1 of Dorothea Arnold and Janine Bourriau, eds. *An Introduction to Ancient Egyptian Pottery*. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag P. von Zabern, 1993. 88.

²⁰⁹ Peter Mey, with Georges Castel and Jean-Claude Goyon, "Installations Rupestres du Moyen et du Nouvel Empire au Gebel Zeit." *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 36 (1980) 310-314; Georges Castel et al. "Gebel Zeit: Pharaonische Bergwerke an den Ufern des Roten Meeres." *Antike Welt* 16 (3) (1985) 19; Paule Posener-Krieger, "Les travaux de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale en 1984-1985." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 85 (1985) 295-320 and pl. LXV; Jean Leclant and Gisèle Clerc, "Fouilles et Travaux en Égypte et au Soudan, 1984-1985." *Orientalia* 55 (1986) 295-296 and figs, 61, 64-65, 69; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 203.

Chapter 3, indicates that female figurines fashioned from clay were more magically efficacious when combined with other materials.

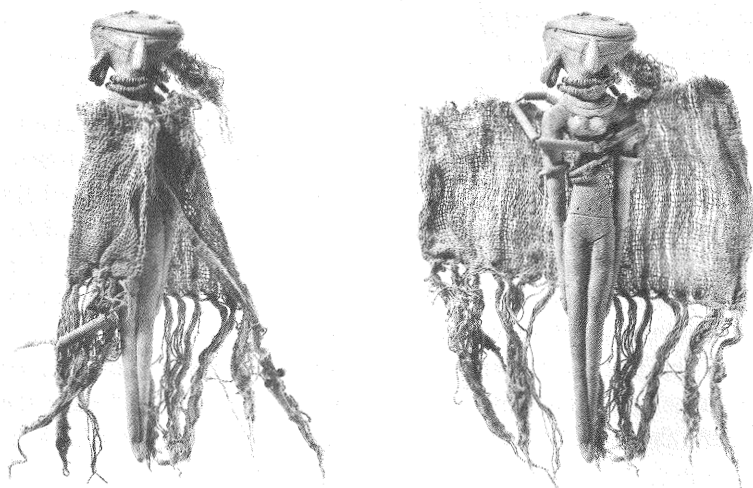


Fig. 8: Type 1 figurine from Gebel Zeit, reproduced with permission of the IFAO.

The occasionally hand-modeled Type 6 figurines also display significant incised decoration. A pointed tool was used to incise the exaggerated triangular lines delimiting the pubic area on four of the five examples; the fifth example preserves only three impressed dots at its pubic region, perhaps serving as vague indications of pubic hair. The Type 6 figurines all retain an incised line differentiating the legs and feet, and in many instances, this line continues around the back of the figurine. This simple yet careful attention to rendering individuated feet sets the Type 6 figurines apart from the other known types.

There is much evidence for the technique of incision in ceramic vessel production as well. Incised decoration can be seen on Egyptian pottery from the Predynastic period onwards, being most prevalent in the First through Second Intermediate Periods, and could be combined with applied elements.²¹⁰ As we have seen, incised decoration, as well as the combination of incised and applied decoration (attested on the Type 1

²¹⁰ Dorothea Arnold, "Techniques and Traditions of Manufacture," 90.

figure), is frequently present on the Mut Precinct handmade ceramic female figurines. Thus, incised decoration can be recognized as a shared technique of pottery vessel and figurine production.

The Mut Precinct figurines that were shaped in a half mold also received further treatment before firing. Again, incising with a sharp tool was a common technique. Small incisions in the moist clay were used to indicate individual hairs or plaits on the wig lappets of many Type 3 figurines. Incised lines also mark the border of the pubic triangle, pubic hairs, and the division between the legs on the Type 3 and 5 figurines. On some Type 3 figures, fingers were also delineated using incised lines (i.e. cat. no. 15) and on a unique Type 3 figure in Brussels, we can observe toes rendered in the same fashion.²¹¹ Although none of the Type 4 figurines from the Mut Precinct display incised decoration, a comparative piece from Medinet Habu does preserve an incised pubic region.²¹²

The Type 3-5 figurines also commonly show a round, impressed or incised navel, created either by pressing the rounded end of a tool, or a finger, into the wet clay before firing.

2.2.4 *Appliqué*

Another embellishment made to the molded female figurines before firing is the application of pieces of clay. These clay appliqués were employed most often for the eyes, breasts, hair/wig, and arms of the female figures.

Clay buttons applied to female figurines as eyes can best be observed on Type 3 figurines from the Mut Precinct (i.e. cat. nos. 10 and 12), and can be seen on comparative excavated figurines from el-Ashmunein²¹³ and the Seti I temple at Gurna.²¹⁴ In some cases, the clay buttons were themselves incised to indicate pupils, as in figurine VIII G W 8 Western half Level 5 #2 2/9/03 (cat. no. 8). From comparanda, we can

²¹¹ Bruxelles, Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire E2844, unfortunately without known provenance: Eugène Warembool, ed., *Ombres d'Égypte: le peuple de Pharaon*. Treignes: Editions du CEDARC, 1999. 76, cat. 43.

²¹² Cairo JE 59693: Uvo Hölscher, *Post-Ramessid Remains. The Excavation of Medinet Habu V*. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1954. 58 and pl. 34C, and Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, 91-92.

²¹³ A. Jeffrey Spencer, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein vol. 3: The Town*. London: The Trustees of the British Museum/British Museum Press, 1983. nos.172, 175: 38 and pl. 37, 40.

²¹⁴ Karol Mysliwiec, *Keramik und Kleinfunde aus der Grabung im Tempel Sethos' I. in Gurna*. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag P. von Zabern, 1987. cat. no.16 and 17: 181, figs. 2166, 2167, pl. XXXII, 1, 2.

note that clay buttons were also applied as eyes to the heads of the Type 4 (“pinched head”) figurines.²¹⁵

Breasts were also separately applied to some molded figures prior to their firing in the form of small, rounded lumps of clay, and were not always symmetrically aligned (i.e. cat. no. 12).²¹⁶ Applied breasts are common on figurine Types 3 and 4 from the Mut Precinct (i.e. cat nos. 12 and 19) and can again be observed on similar figurines from el-Ashmunein²¹⁷ and the Seti I Gurna temple.²¹⁸

The hair on the head of many Type 3 figurines was also applied to the molded form of the female prior to firing. A small amount of clay was placed at the top of the forehead, and two thick lappets were also luted to the head; these were then frequently incised while moist. This technique is visible on many of the Type 3 Mut Precinct figures (i.e. cat. no. 6, **Fig. 4** above), as well as on comparative examples, such as figurine UC 59335 at the Petrie Museum, which retains a small portion of the right wig lappet at shoulder-level. These examples make clear that the wigs of Type 3 figurines were applied separately and were not part of the initial molded image.²¹⁹

While the arms are lost on many of the Mut Precinct figurines, one example, catalogue number 17, shows how rolls of clay could be luted to the shoulders and torso of Type 3 figures to indicate arms. The use of clay rolls for arms can also be seen on a similar Type 3 figurine found at North Karnak.²²⁰ Such a technique was probably extensively employed, and may help to explain why so many Type 3 figures are missing their arms: such arm rolls would have been thin and in some cases, like the North Karnak example, mostly detached from the body of the figure, making them liable to accidental breakage.

²¹⁵ Cairo J59693: Uvo Hölscher, *Post-Ramessid Remains. The Excavation of Medinet Habu V*. Chicago: OI, 1954. 58, pl.34C and Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, 91-92; UC 29792; Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use, with over 1800 figures from University College*. London: British School of archaeology in Egypt, 1927. no.430: 60 and pl. 52. .

²¹⁶ Asymmetrical applied breasts can also be seen on some feminoform vessels: Dorothea Arnold, “Techniques and Traditions of Manufacture,” fig. 100C.

²¹⁷ Spencer, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein vol. 3: The Town.*, nos. 172, 175: 38 and pl.37, 40.

²¹⁸ Mysliwiec, *Kermik und Kleinfunde*, cat. nos. 16 and 17: figs. 2166, 2167, pl. XXXII, 1,2.

²¹⁹ I am grateful to Dr. Stephen Quirke and the staff of the Petrie Museum for facilitating my research there in May-June 2005.

²²⁰ Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, B.155: fig. 54.

With regard to ceramic vessel production, the technique of luting separate clay elements to exterior vessel walls at the leather-hard stage is known from as early as the Early Dynastic period.²²¹ In the Middle Kingdom, Second Intermediate Period, and New Kingdom, small, mold-made or finger-modeled faces were added to feminoform vessels, together with clay appliqués for such elements as the eyes, breasts and arms.²²² This technique can also be seen on the well-known corpus of Bes jars, thrown vessels which incorporate applied clay elements for facial features such as the ears, eyes, nose, and mouth of the god, and body parts like the arms and navel.²²³ Bes jars manufactured using this technique are known from the 18th Dynasty into the Late Period.²²⁴ The use of clay appliqués for specific facial and body elements can thus be understood as another decorative method employed by the makers of both these types of figure vessels, and the craftsmen who manufactured many New Kingdom and later female figurines. These craftsmen should therefore be recognized as one and the same type of artisan, namely, a potter.²²⁵

After firing, a number of the female figurines from the Mut Precinct were treated with pigment. Two techniques can be observed: a red coating over one or both sides of the figurine, or more meticulous applications of pigment to specific areas of the figure.

2.2.5 Red Wash

The application of a red ochre²²⁶ wash²²⁷ to a fired figurine can best be seen on figurine VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 2 Level 3 1/6/04 (cat. no. 10),

²²¹ Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 20.

²²² Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 12-18 and pl.2B and C; Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 21 and fig. 66; Dorothea Arnold, "Techniques and Traditions of Manufacture," 88 and fig. 100C; Bourriau, "Pottery Figure Vases," 86 and pl.26,1.

²²³ Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 21, cover and figs. 17, 53, 60, 64; Dorothea Arnold, "Techniques and Traditions of Manufacture," 88-89, figs. 100C, D and F; Bourriau, "Pottery Figure Vases," 86 and pl. 25,5.

²²⁴ Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 21; Bourriau, "Pottery Figure Vases," 86.

²²⁵ Regarding the feminoform vessels, Dorman (*Faces in Clay*, 13-14) notes that, "None of these jars presuppose any expertise beyond that of approximating female anatomy in the most summary manner." This statement is similar to his remarks on the production of anthropomorphic figurines (*Faces in Clay*, 27).

²²⁶ Red ochres are the most common red pigments used by Egyptian potters for washes, and by pot painters for painted decoration: Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 24, 27-28; Dorothea Arnold, "Techniques and Traditions of Manufacture," 86, 101.

²²⁷ A 'wash,' defined as a combination of pigment and water, is distinct from a 'slip,' a mixture of pigment, clay and water (Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 17; Dorothea Arnold,

a Type 3, which has areas of red pigment visible on both the front and the back of the figure. Traces of this red coating remain on numerous other figurines as well (see catalogue, **Appendix A**). Jean Jacquet notes that a red ochre coating is present on many of the figurines uncovered in the Platform 90 area at North Karnak, and large quantities of raw ochre were found in workshop refuse at that site.²²⁸ The excavators of the New Kingdom and post-New Kingdom levels at Memphis/Kom Rabi'a also state that five of their forty-four pottery female figurines retain a red slip,²²⁹ and red coatings are also mentioned for female figurines from Memphis/Mit Rahineh and Amarna.²³⁰ Personal examination by the author of 44 fired silt female figurines dating to the New Kingdom and later in three British collections has revealed that 16 of these figures retain traces of a red wash.²³¹

There are several difficulties, however, in ascertaining the full extent of the use of red washes on ceramic female figurines of the New Kingdom and later. The first is that in many cases, the coating may have faded to the point where it is no longer detectable to the naked eye.²³² A

"Techniques and Traditions of Manufacture," 86). David Aston, following Prudence M. Rice (*Pottery Analysis*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987. 151), proposes using the word 'slip' to refer to any coating applied pre-firing, and 'wash' to refer to any coating applied post firing, noting that "since a clay suspension will not adhere to fired pottery without some sort of bonding agent, the coloured coatings added post firing are almost certainly washes." (*Die Grabung des Pelizaeus-Museums Hildesheim im Qantir-Pi-Ramesse. Band 1. Die Keramik des Grabungsplatzes QI. Teil 1: Corpus of Fabrics, Wares and Shapes*. Mainz: Verlag P. von Zabern, 1998. 31). Thus, in keeping with Aston's terminology, the term 'wash' will be used here, as that is most likely what remains visible on the Mut Precinct figurines, having been applied post-firing.

²²⁸ Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*. Cairo: Institut Francais d'Archéologie Orientale, 2001.62 and Helen Jacquet-Gordon, personal communication, January 2006. I reiterate my gratitude to Dr. Jacquet and Dr. Jacquet-Gordon for discussing with me the many female figurines they uncovered at North Karnak.

²²⁹ Likely a wash (see above n.227): EES 76, 281, 723, 1464, 3756: Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 29.

²³⁰ Rudolf Anthes, *Mit Rahineh 1956*. Philadelphia: University Museum, 1965. nos. 242, 243: 127; nos. 245, 247, 248: 128; Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 85 and 282. Gay Robins also generally notes that on New Kingdom nude female figures, "her skin is usually painted dark red..." although she does not distinguish between washes and more detailed applications of red pigment: "Dress, Undress, and the Representation of Fertility and Potency in New Kingdom Egyptian art." *Sexuality in Ancient Art*. Ed. Natalie B. Kampen. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996. 28..

²³¹ UC 115, UC 129, UC 8655, UC 24515, UC 29792, UC 30029, UC 45795a+b, UC 45796, UC 45803, UC 50526, UC 59319, UC 59324, UC 59325, EA 41107, Ashmolean 1931.503, 1888.532. The Petrie Museum (UC) figurines can be viewed online by searching the catalogue at <<http://www.petrie.ucl.ac.uk/index2.html>>.

²³² A similar situation was observed by the Japanese excavators of Tell Mastuma, Syria,

solution to this is for excavators to compile statistics for their site, and determine how many figurines in the corpus retain a red wash. The likelihood of a red coating for a given type or chronological range of figurines can then be inferred. This method has been utilized by the North Karnak excavators, who assume that the majority of their New Kingdom and later female figurines from the Platform 90 area received a red coating during their manufacture.²³³ Microscopic analysis to detect traces of pigment on ceramic figurines is also a possibility,²³⁴ but can be cost-prohibitive for archaeological expeditions, and is normally reserved for scientific studies²³⁵ or higher-status objects.

The terminology used in publications to describe figurines' technological aspects can also present difficulties. Female figures are often described as simply 'painted',²³⁶ or '[painted] with red paint',²³⁷ but either of these expressions could mean coated with red pigment, or painted in more detail. Even more confusingly, some figures are described as made of 'red pottery'.²³⁸ While the latter phrase usually denotes a figurine fashioned from Nile silt, it could also indicate extant red paint on the figure. Such ambiguous phrases are best avoided, as their lack of specificity makes it

whose figurines display analogous manufacturing and decoration techniques to the Mut Precinct figures. The Tell Mastuma figures were molded in a half mold, their backs scraped with a blunt instrument, fired, and then painted red post-firing, usually on one side only. The Tell Mastuma figurines also appear to have been intentionally broken, and were recovered in ash pits and accumulation layers (i.e. refuse zones). The excavators have tentatively identified these figurines as manifestations of local religion deliberately broken and discarded: Shin'ichi Nishiyama and Satoru Yoshizawa, "Who Worshipped the Clay Goddess?: the late first millennium BC terracotta figurines from Tell Mastuma, Northwest Syria." *Bulletin of the Orient Museum* (Tokyo) 17 (1997) 73-98.

²³³ Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, 62.

²³⁴ Elizabeth A. Hendrix, "Colors on Ancient Greek Terra-cotta Figurines." *Sculpture Review* (Summer 2001) 32-35; Pierre du Bourguet, "Une ancêtre des figurines d'envoûtement percées d'aiguilles, avec ses compléments magiques, au musée du Louvre." Ed. Jean Vercoutter. *Livre du Centenaire 1880 – 1980*. Cairo: IFAO, 1980. 229-230 n.4.

²³⁵ Such as those referenced in Lorna Lee and Stephen Quirke, "Painting Materials." *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*. Eds. Paul T. Nicholson and Ian Shaw. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge UP, 2000. 104-120.

²³⁶ i.e. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Médineh* (1933-4), 124; *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh* (1948-51), 90.

²³⁷ i.e. Horst Jaritz et al. "Der Totentempel des Merenptah in Qurna. 5. Grabungsbericht." *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 57 (2001) 162.

²³⁸ i.e. Kazimierz Michakowski et al. *Fouilles Franco-Polonaises. Rapports II Tell Edfou 1938* (Cairo: IFAO, 1938) 106-107, 110-111 and more recently, Spencer, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein vol. 3: The Town*, nos. 173, 175, 176, 177, 178: 39, and Guillemette Andreu, *Les artistes de pharaon: Deir el-Médineh et la Vallée des Rois*. Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 2002. 115, cat. 56.

nearly impossible to determine how much red coloring, if any, remains on a given figurine, or where on the figurine red pigment was placed.²³⁹ Since illustrations of female figurines tend to be black-and-white plates and/or line drawings, it is only through detailed written descriptions, the use of established measuring tools like the Munsell color chart,²⁴⁰ and proper terminology that the true nature of a figure's coloration can be conveyed.

Lastly, remarking on either the presence or absence of a red coating has not yet become standard in published descriptions of Egyptian ceramic female figurines.²⁴¹ This may be because the presence of red pigment has not been considered important for an overall understanding of the figures, or because the corpus under consideration is uniformly decorated and the presence or absence of a red coating taken for granted. Given the strong ideological associations that the ancient Egyptians made with the color red,²⁴² however, this is hardly a fact to be ignored on any object.

Although it is in many cases no longer detectable, we can assume from the frequency of red coatings still visible on the Types 3-6 Mut figurines, noted in **Appendix A**, and from comparative provenanced figurines, that a red wash was applied to many of the New Kingdom and

²³⁹ Similar terminological difficulties were experienced by Colin A. Hope while compiling his corpus of blue-painted pottery from Amarna: Hope, "Blue-painted and Polychrome Decorated Pottery from Amarna: A Preliminary Corpus." *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 2 (1991) 19.

²⁴⁰ The Munsell soil color chart (New Windsor, NY: Munsell Color, 2000) is a standard tool that archaeologists can use to describe the appearance of fired clay, pigments, and other organic materials. See, for example, Paul T. Nicholson and Pamela J. Rose, "Pottery Fabrics and Ware Groups at El-Amarna." *Amarna Reports II*. Ed. Barry J. Kemp. London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1985. 133-174; Nigel Strudwick, *The Tombs of Amenhotep, Khnummose, and Amenmose at Thebes (nos. 294, 253, and 254)*. Oxford: Griffith Institute/Ashmolean Museum, 1996, Appendix 3. Munsell readings are given for the Mut Precinct figurines in the catalogue (**Appendix A**).

²⁴¹ All of the difficulties noted here - erosion of post-firing wash, ambiguous terminology, and lack of references to surface decoration - were also experienced by Raz Kletter in preparing his study of the frequently white-washed and painted Judean Pillar Figurines: *The Judean Pillar-Figurines*, 50.

²⁴² See e.g. Pinch, "Red Things: the symbolism of colour in magic." *Colour and Painting in Ancient Egypt*. Ed. W. Vivian Davies. London: BM Press, 2001. 182-185; Richard H. Wilkinson, *Symbol and Magic in Egyptian Art*. London and New York: Thames & Hudson, 1994. 104-125; Robert K. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1993. 147-148; Sydney H. Aufrère, *L'univers minéral dans la pensée égyptienne*. 2 vols. Cairo: IFAO, 1991. 553-560; Philippe Derchain, "Le lotus, la mandragore et le persée." *CdE* 50 (1975) 74; Jean-Claude Goyon, "Les Révélations du Mystère des Quatres Boules." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 75 (1975) 380-383.

later ceramic female figurines from the Mut Precinct. This technological addition to the clay figures is here regarded as intrinsic to the objects, and deserving of further analysis, which will be undertaken in section 2.4 below.

To summarize, from the available evidence, the all-over application of a red wash should be regarded as a common addition to Egyptian ceramic female figurines from the New Kingdom onwards, and is most clearly visible on the Type 3 figures at the Mut Precinct. It should further be noted that such a wash would not require the expertise of a trained painter, but simply the faculties of a potter, who would have had extensive experience applying similar coatings to pottery vessels.²⁴³ This application of red pigment bears with it ideological notions associated with the color red, and was a conscious choice on the part of the manufacturer. Furthermore, it can be analyzed for what it may tell us about the function of these objects in Egyptian life (see below, section 2.4).

2.2.6 *Polychrome Decoration*

A more detailed application of pigments post-firing can be observed on one unassigned female figurine from the Mut Precinct, as well as on the Type 2 figurines, which will be discussed in depth below. Red, black, and blue pigment can be seen on catalogue number 40, with red paint appearing on the face, blue on the female's hair/wig, and black pigment on the face and head. This multicolored decoration is useful in dating the figurine to between the mid-18th and mid-20th Dynasties, when polychrome (and blue-painted) pottery was produced.²⁴⁴

Again, not requiring much skill in the way of draftsmanship, the pigments applied to the unassigned figurine after firing could have been applied by the potters who shaped the figurines. However, in the case of some polychrome figures – namely, the Type 2's – it is possible that the paint was applied by artisans employed specifically to adorn ceramic vessels and figurines with painted decoration. The evidence in favor of this hypothesis will be introduced immediately below.

The Type 2 figurines from the Mut Precinct dating to the New Kingdom can be regarded as a special case in the application of multi-hued

²⁴³ Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 17; Ballet, "Potiers et fabricants," 116; Dorothea Arnold, "Techniques and Traditions of Manufacture," 85-86.

²⁴⁴ Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 26-28; Hope, "Blue-Painted and Polychrome Decorated Pottery from Amarna," 17; Aston (*Egyptian Pottery of the Late New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period*, 79) reports that "At present no examples of pots with post firing decoration (apart from white washed rims) which can be dated to the Late New Kingdom or Third Intermediate Period have come to light."

paint to ceramic female figures. While they do not exhibit the embellishments encountered on other types of molded figurines, such as incised decoration, clay appliques, or all-over red washes, they do preserve more localized applications of pigment.²⁴⁵ For example, figurine VIII G East 5 Level 4A 1/8/04 (cat. no. 3), which preserves the lower torso and legs of a woman lying flat on a bed, retains traces of red pigment on the flesh areas of the female only – her left arm, and left leg. No red (or other) pigment can be seen on the surface area of the bed, demonstrating that the paint was specifically and carefully applied to the molded figure of the woman.

In addition, figurine VIII G West Level 5B 1/19/03 (cat. no. 2, **Fig. 2** above), found in two joining pieces in a secure 18th Dynasty context, retains numerous traces of its painted decoration. Red pigment is visible on the face and neck of the molded female, and possibly also along her left arm and leg. In addition, red pigment was carefully applied to the molded figure of the child at the woman's left, showing again that red was specifically used to highlight the skin of the figures' bodies. Black pigment remains on the female's wig.

White pigment can also be seen on this Type 2 figurine. Traces of white remain on the female's throat, upper chest area, left breast, and along the right side of her body where her molded image meets the flat bed. White splotches can also be observed above and behind the head of the baby beside the woman, extending behind its neck and shoulder. While this could be the remains of white paint strategically placed to highlight certain parts of the female and the bed, instances of white pigment being used as decoration on female figurines are rare,²⁴⁶ and seem to occur mainly when incense cones are present atop the woman's wig.²⁴⁷ What is more likely is that the white substance on the Mut Precinct figurine is the remnants of the background upon which colored pigments were applied. This is the normal procedure observed in the 'polychrome'²⁴⁸ (or 'white

²⁴⁵ See catalogue (**Appendix A**). Note that while limestone Type 2 figurines of the New Kingdom and later can also be painted in polychrome, this study will concentrate on Type 2 figurines of baked clay, as no limestone examples have been uncovered by Johns Hopkins at the Mut Precinct.

²⁴⁶ See discussion immediately below of figurine EA 55595/Amarna small find 22/85.

²⁴⁷ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 207-209. Incense cones are not present on the Mut Precinct figurines.

²⁴⁸ The 'blue painted' vs. 'polychrome painted' terminological distinction was first suggested by Colin A. Hope in *Egyptian Pottery*, 1st edition (Princes Risborough, UK: Shire Publications Ltd. 1987) 26 and "Egyptologists now tend to use the term "Blue painted" to refer to pre-fired wares and "polychrome painted" to refer to post fired wares": Aston, *Die Keramik des Grabungsplatzes QI*, 34 and n.42.

background'²⁴⁹) style of pottery decoration, known best from the Middle through New Kingdoms, and specifically from the mid-18th to the 20th Dynasty, when colored pigments were applied to the outer walls of pottery vessels after firing.²⁵⁰ Similar patterns of splotchy white pigment on can be seen on the top molded portion of Type 2 ceramic female figurines of the New Kingdom at the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology,²⁵¹ the British Museum,²⁵² the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford,²⁵³ as well as on a limestone Type 2 figure at the British Museum that retains much of its original paint.²⁵⁴ Bernard Bruyère noted that the woman's skin on some Type 2 figurines from Deir el-Medina was painted "rouge pointillé de blanc," while also remarking that such pigments were applied post-firing.²⁵⁵

One exception to white pigment being employed as a base for polychrome painting on reclining female figurines of the New Kingdom should be noted here. It is British Museum EA 55595, a female figurine recovered from the Workmen's Village at Amarna.²⁵⁶ In her 1983 article,

²⁴⁹ Arnold, Dorothea, "Techniques and Traditions of Manufacture," 98-99.

²⁵⁰ Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 27. These polychrome painted vessels, due to the friability of their painted decoration, are often thought to have had purely funerary uses, although ceremonial functions have also been proposed: Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 28; Martha Bell, "Regional Variation in Polychrome Pottery of the 19th Dynasty," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 1 (1987) 55-57. Note that the technique of applying polychrome pigment over a white base has also been observed on painted wooden statues of the Old Kingdom: Karol Myśliwiec, "The Red and Yellow: An Aspect of the Egyptian 'Aspective.'" *Timelines: Studies in honour of Manfred Bietak*. Eds. Ernst Czerny, Irmgard Bein, Hermann Hunger, Dagmar Melman, and Angela Schwab. Leuven: Peeters, 2006. I: 231.

²⁵¹ UC 8272, UC 8654, UC 8658, UC 16757. These figurines can be viewed online by searching the Petrie Museum catalogue at <<http://www.petrie.ucl.ac.uk/index2.html>>. I am grateful to Dr. Stephen Quirke and the staff of the Petrie Museum for facilitating my visit in May-June 2005.

²⁵² EA 20982. I am grateful to Dr. Nigel Strudwick for facilitating my visit to the British Museum in June 2005.

²⁵³ 1921.1315. Special thanks go to Dr. Helen Whitehouse and Mr. Tom Hardwick for facilitating my study of these figurines in June 2005.

²⁵⁴ EA 2371. This figurine can be viewed online at <http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/aes/l/limestone_figurine_in_the_form.aspx>. Note that like many of our examples in baked clay, this figurine also exhibits clean lateral breakage through its middle, even though it is much larger than most ceramic female figures and of a much harder material. This breakage is surely deliberate.

²⁵⁵ *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Médineh (1934-5)*, 141.

²⁵⁶ Amarna Small Finds Database: <http://www.amarnaproject.com/pages/recent_projects/material_culture/small_finds/database.shtml> no. 22/85. This figurine was molded in an open mold of Nile silt and has a flat back, scraped smooth when the wet clay was pressed into the mold. It depicts a woman lying on her back, arms at her sides. The figurine is painted in polychrome both on its front and on its back, where the wig is painted black and the garment white. The eyes of the figure are also painted in precise detail, with the

“Childbirth and Female Figurines at Deir el-Medina and el-‘Amarna,” Geraldine Pinch categorized the white paint remaining on this example as “probably indicat[ing] clothing.”²⁵⁷ This is likely to be the case, as personal inspection by the author has confirmed that the white pigment on this figure is not a base for other colors, but indicates an ankle-length, short-sleeved garment.²⁵⁸ This is especially evident in that the woman’s neck, breasts, lower arms, and feet are painted red, the usual flesh color for these figures,²⁵⁹ but no red (or other) pigment appears on top of the large areas of white paint that extend across the chest, down the woman’s arms to the elbows, and cover the entire torso and legs to the ankles.

Leaving aside the above figure in the British Museum, there may be further support for the suggestion that polychrome vase painters painted the New Kingdom Type 2 ceramic female figurines beyond the basic fact that both the vessels and figurines were painted post-firing with multicolored pigments on a white base. The pigments that occur on the full range of known Type 2 figures, the most elaborate of which retain floral and figural decoration,²⁶⁰ coincide exactly with the known color palette for

cosmetic lines and pupils in black and the whites of the eyes in white. The figure has a curious, almost animal-looking nose-mouth area, as well as a rounded, protruding stomach. Overall, it would be difficult to add this figurine to the list of known Type 2 figures, which are molded directly onto a bed or flat slab, as it was not found in association with a bed, despite sharing the same British Museum accession number (EA 55595) with a ceramic bed whose top is painted in a red and white check pattern. That object, Amarna small find 22/72, was found in the North Passage of the Workmen’s Village, whereas the female figure, Amarna small find 22/85, was found in a Workman’s Village house: Amarna Small Finds Database <http://www.amarnaproject.com/pages/recent_projects/material_culture/small_finds/database.shtml>

no. 22/72. The assimilation of the female figure with the ceramic bed likely comes from their shared museum number and the fact that they were published next to one another in the same plate of the excavation report: T. Eric Peet and C.L. Wooley. *The City of Akhenaten I: Excavations of 1921 and 1922 at El-Amarnah*. London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1923. pl.XXIII, 5, but they are not, as Pinch states, “a limestone set”: *Votive Offerings*, 207.

²⁵⁷ Pinch, “Childbirth and Female Figurines,” 408-409.

²⁵⁸ June 1, 2005. I reiterate my thanks to Dr. Nigel Strudwick and the staff of the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan at the British Museum for their assistance during my visit.

²⁵⁹ Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Médineh (1934-5)*, 141; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 207-209; Robins, “Dress, Undress,” 28.

²⁶⁰ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 207-209; “Childbirth and Female Figurines,” 406-410.

polychrome painted pottery.²⁶¹ This palette consists of black, red, yellow, blue, green, and white.²⁶²

Thus, in our effort to isolate the artisans who created these multihued painted female figurines, we can again utilize evidence from pottery vessel manufacture and conjecture that if not potters, it was perhaps even more specialized craftsmen, such as the painters who executed the floral, faunal and abstract designs on polychrome painted pottery,²⁶³ who were charged with decorating these particularly elaborate Type 2 ceramic female figurines. These artisans would have worked in painters' workshops where the pigments needed to decorate a finished figurine were at their immediate disposal. The painters' workshops were probably situated in close proximity to the potters' ateliers where the figurines were initially shaped and fired. Furthermore, the painters' workshops, due to the expensiveness and rareness of pigments – especially the synthetic blue and green derived from copper used on polychrome vessels²⁶⁴ – were almost certainly state-controlled (or at least state-supplied) establishments attached to temples or other royal institutions.²⁶⁵

In a study utilizing both pigment colors and the specific motif of the hanging floral collar, Martha Bell has shown that there are strong connections between polychrome painted pottery and several other types of painted objects dating from the late 18th Dynasty through the Ramesside period. Her earliest examples are polychrome painted vessels and house paintings at Amarna, both depicting floral collars executed in the same color palette.²⁶⁶ According to Bell, the hanging floral collar then develops a greater elaboration in the Ramesside period, when it appears on the so-

²⁶¹ Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 27.

²⁶² Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 207-209; Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 27-28.

²⁶³ For the motifs executed on polychrome painted pottery after firing, see Hope, "Blue-painted and Polychrome Decorated Pottery from Amarna," 83-84.

²⁶⁴ Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 27; Lee and Quirke, "Painting Materials," 108-111, 111-113; Aston, *Die Keramik des Grabungsplatzes QI*, 56-58; Hope, "Aspects of Ceramic Specialization and Standardization in the New Kingdom." *Bulletin de liaison du groupe international d'étude de la céramique égyptienne* 7 (1982) 40; Hope, "Some Memphite Blue Painted Pottery of the Mid-18th Dynasty." *Ancient Egypt, The Aegean and the Near East: Studies in Honour of Martha Rhoads Bell*. 254 and n.20.

²⁶⁵ Christopher J. Eyre, "Work and the Organisation of Work in the New Kingdom." *Labor in the Ancient Near East*. Ed. Marvin A. Powell. New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1987. 171-175, 190-196; Melinda K. Hartwig, "Painting." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Donald B. Redford. III: 4; Marianne Eaton-Krauss, "Artists and Artisans." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* I: 136-139; Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 263.

²⁶⁶ Martha Bell, "Regional Variation," 54 and n.87, 89, and 90.

called *Wochenlaube* ostraca from Deir el-Medina, on polychrome painted amphorae from Deir el-Medina and Gurob, and on funerary goods, tomb paintings, and temple walls in Thebes.²⁶⁷ Significantly for this investigation, Geraldine Pinch has connected the iconography of the same *Wochenlaube* ostraca and house paintings that Bell cites with the iconography of Type 2 female figurines from Amarna, Deir el-Medina, and Gurob.²⁶⁸

Building on Pinch and Bell's observations, we find telling geographical correlations between provenanced polychrome painted vessels and Type 2 figurines. Turning first to the state-sponsored village of Deir el-Medina, undoubtedly the best-known locale for the decoration of polychrome painted objects of the New Kingdom, significant numbers of both polychrome painted vessels and painted Type 2 female figurines have been found at the site.²⁶⁹ Similarly, both polychrome vessels and Type 2 figurines have been excavated at the prominent New Kingdom royal cities of Amarna²⁷⁰ and Gurob.²⁷¹ One may also wonder whether artisans trained in the same technique were present at Memphis/Kom Rabi'a, the New Kingdom and post-New Kingdom domestic and artisanal quarter, where numerous Type 2 polychrome painted female figurines have been excavated,²⁷² even though no polychrome painted vessels or sherds have yet been linked to the site.²⁷³

²⁶⁷ Emma Brunner-Traut, "Die Wochenlaube." *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung* 3 (1955) 11-30; Martha Bell, "Regional Variation," 54-55 and n.83-103.

²⁶⁸ Pinch, "Childbirth and Female Figurines," 405-414, via elements like beds decorated with snakes and convolvulus plants, the jewelry and hairstyle of the main female figure, the presence of babies and subsidiary figures, and accouterments like mirrors and sandals.

²⁶⁹ Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, fig. 26; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 232-233; Martha Bell, "Regional Variation," 49-76; Pinch, "Childbirth and Female Figurines," 405-414; Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Médineh (1934-5)*, pl. XLIV (bottom).

²⁷⁰ Martha Bell, "Regional Variation," 54 and n.87; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 232-233.

²⁷¹ Martha Bell, "Regional Variation," 57-59; Guy Brunton and Reginald Engelbach, *Gurob*. London: British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1927. pl. XIII, 6, pl. XXV, 20, pl. XLVII, 13; Angela P. Thomas, *Gurob: A New Kingdom Town*. Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips, 1981. 82-82, pl. 54-55.

²⁷² Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 10-11, 28-30, nos. EES 818, EES 1030, EES 1143, EES 1152, EES 1363 (and several other Type 2's which have probably lost their paint: EES 809/EAO 42, EES 3785).

²⁷³ Hope, "Blue-painted and Polychrome Decorated Pottery From Amarna," 18. The ceramic finds from the recent EES excavations at Kom Rabi'a will be published by Janine Bourriau in a forthcoming volume: Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 3-4, 10.

The material, iconographic, and geographical links indicated above would seem to suggest that it was craftsmen familiar with the current trends in painted decoration, skilled in the application of paint to fired ceramics, and having access to significant quantities of pigment – namely, painters residing in the New Kingdom royal cities of Amarna, Thebes (including Deir el-Medina), Gurob, and perhaps Memphis – who were entrusted with decorating the elaborate Type 2 female figurines. A similar hypothesis for “a restricted number of artisans [operating] at certain major centers” has been proposed for the manufacture of blue-painted pottery.²⁷⁴

While this is not to suggest that all Type 2 figurines of the 18th-20th Dynasties were manufactured exclusively at these sites, it is an attempt to specify the most likely centers for large-scale figurine production based on the materials and techniques shared with polychrome vessels, and the quantities of vessels and figurines excavated at the sites. Painted Type 2 ceramic figurines have been found in smaller numbers at smaller sites (i.e. Sawama, near Akhmim;²⁷⁵ Riqqeh, near Memphis²⁷⁶) and could presumably have been made there, but these smaller sites are still in proximity to major New Kingdom towns, and the portable size of female figurines makes their distribution outwards from large centers a serious possibility (see section 2.3 below).

To reiterate, what appears to be taking shape through the combined material and iconographic analysis of these various polychrome painted objects is a strong indication that New Kingdom Type 2 (women-on-a-bed) figurines received their painted decoration from royally-sponsored artisans who were charged with decorating a range of objects. Displaying a set of favored motifs and executed in a similar palette, we should consider the Type 2 female figurines found at these royal centers to be yet one more type of standardized object prepared in a state-sponsored atelier, rather than

²⁷⁴ Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 8; Hope, “Blue-painted and Polychrome Decorated Pottery from Amarna,” 18; “Aspects of Ceramic Specialization and Standardization in the New Kingdom,” 40-41.

²⁷⁵ Brooklyn Museum 14.606-8: Janine Bourriau and Ann Millard, “The Excavation of Sawama in 1914 by G.A. Wainwright and T. Whittemore.” *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 57 (1971) 28, 33-34, figs. 16 and 19; James Henry Breasted, Jr., *Egyptian Servant Statues*. New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1948. 96 and pl. 93c.

²⁷⁶ UC16343: Reginald Engelbach, *Riqqeh and Memphis VI*. London: British School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1915. pl. XXII, 6. Although the figurine is rendered as complete in the Engelbach line drawing, personal observation at the Petrie Museum in June 2005 revealed that the figurine was horizontally and cleanly broken in two places: at the woman’s mid-torso and lower legs. The fragments are now unfortunately fused together by a heavy coating of wax. The figurine can be viewed online via the Petrie Museum catalogue at <<http://www.petrie.ucl.ac.uk/index2.html>>.

crudely-formed, randomly-painted objects. Whereas archaeological data like the pre-fired figurine found at an Amarna pottery workshop speaks to the shaping and firing of female figurines at pottery ateliers, it is the color palette and elaborate painted decoration of the Type 2 figurines that speak to another stage of manufacture, their adornment, which was not necessarily done by potters or in a pottery workshop, but more likely by painters working in adjacent or nearby painting ateliers. As noted by Aldred and others, "An Egyptian work of art is often the result of a collaboration between several different specialists,"²⁷⁷ and this appears to be the case with the Type 2 ceramic painted figurines. Here it is also useful to cite Martha Bell's conclusions for polychrome painted vessels from Deir el-Medina: "It would therefore appear that the polychrome ornament was painted after and separate from both potting and firing; that the people involved were different; and that the decoration could have been done right in the village, where both paint and skill was at hand."²⁷⁸

As for the locus of manufacture for the remaining types of ceramic female figurines from the Mut Precinct (Types 1, 3-6), the above technological study suggests that it was experienced potters working in well-equipped workshops and familiar with the standard types of the day who were charged with the production of ceramic female figurines of the New Kingdom and later. These workshops were likely located within a temple or other state-sponsored complex.²⁷⁹ While these workshops may have been part of the same outfits that produced the more elaborate Type 2 ceramic female figurines, they could also have been distinct, smaller ateliers requiring fewer materials and craftsmen.

Although it is clear from the archaeological evidence that pottery manufacture could take place at the domestic or village level,²⁸⁰ it is the

²⁷⁷ Cyril Aldred, *Egyptian Art*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1980. 22; Eaton-Krauss, "Artists and Artisans," 137-8.

²⁷⁸ Martha Bell, "Regional Variation," 55.

²⁷⁹ For a similar assessment based not on materials and technology, but on function, see Angela M. Tooley, "Child's Toy or Ritual Object?" *Göttinger Miszellen* 123 (1991) 105: "The place of manufacture of objects with magico-religious usage was in all probability, a temple workshop."

²⁸⁰ Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 7-8; Bourriau, Nicholson and Rose, "Pottery," 141-142; Eyre, "Work and the Organisation of Work in the New Kingdom," 193; Nicholson, "The Pottery Workshop at Q48.4 at Tell el-Amarna," 61-70, Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 260-267; and as evidenced by the figurine mold found in the workmen's village of Deir el-Medina, which demonstrates that figurines were manufactured in the village, whereas pottery vessels were delivered: Elizabeth Frood, "The Potters: The Organization, Delivery, and Product of Work." Jac. J. Janssen, Elizabeth Frood and Maren Goecke-Bauer, *Woodcutters, Potters and Doorkeepers: Service Personnel of the Deir el-Medina Workmen*. Leiden: Nederlands Instituut Voor Het Nabije Oosten, 2003. 29ff.

evidence for extensive workshops (including potteries) connected to state palaces and temples, especially the Temple of Amun at Karnak,²⁸¹ the abundance of set types of figurines excavated at both the Mut Precinct and North Karnak,²⁸² and the telling industrial remains found behind the Mut temple's Sacred Lake, that lead me to believe that it was craftsmen working within the Karnak temple complex, if not specifically at the Mut Temple precinct, who produced the Johns Hopkins-excavated ceramic female figurines. I am hereby presuming the least amount of movement for the Mut Precinct figurines by siting their locus of manufacture as close as possible to their excavated context. It should further be noted that the artisans who produced these baked clay female figurines were in all likelihood men, as feminine versions of the title "potter" are not attested, and pottery production scenes in tomb paintings depict only men.²⁸³

Recognizing the technological similarities between Type 2 female figurines and other well-known New Kingdom painted funerary and domestic creations such as the polychrome painted vessels²⁸⁴ – as well as the many shared techniques of pottery vessel and figurine manufacture elucidated in this chapter – should finally move female figurines of the New Kingdom through Late Period out of the sphere of 'crude' objects of haphazard construction, and elevate them to the status of deliberately manufactured, standardized objects produced by state-sponsored workshops.²⁸⁵

²⁸¹ Eyre, "Work and the Organisation of Work in the New Kingdom," 190-191, 193-196, 199-200; Eaton-Krauss, "Artists and Artisans," 139; Tooley, "Child's Toy or Ritual Object?" 105 and n.47; Nicholson, Paul. "The Firing of Pottery." Fascicle 1 of Dorothea Arnold and Janine Bourriau, eds. *An Introduction to Ancient Egyptian Pottery*. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag P. von Zabern, 1993. 115-116.

²⁸² Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, 62 and fig. 54, discussed in more detail below.

²⁸³ The feminine title for potter would have been (*i*)*kḏwt*, but such a title is not attested: *WB V*: 74. See also Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 6-9, 13-15, 18 figs. 6-9, 13; Catharine H. Roehrig, "Woman's work: Some Occupations of Nonroyal Women as Depicted in Ancient Egyptian art" *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt*. Eds. Ann K. Capel and Glenn E. Markoe. New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1996. 15.

²⁸⁴ Peter Dorman, citing much of the same evidence presented here, has recently added ceramic canopic jar lids to the list of objects that may have been decorated by "painters engaged in tomb decoration and who were involved in adding figural adornment to certain types of ceramic vessels." *Faces in Clay* 69 and n.286.

²⁸⁵ A similar study by Joachim F. Quack argues that the clay execration figures and plaques found at Giza and Saqqara "should not be considered as occasional private enterprises but rather as a matter-of-fact business of the state.": "Some Old Kingdom Execration Figures from the Teti Cemetery." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 13 (2002) 156-157.

2.2.7 Durability

One final technological aspect of ceramic female figurines that must be considered here is their durability, that is, their “ability to withstand mechanical stresses during use.”²⁸⁶ To quote Douglass Bailey, “[T]he long-term durability of fired clay not only makes our study possible, but it also enabled figurines to do things that objects made of other, more perishable, media simply could not have done. Much of the authority of figurines...rests on their durability, that is to say their success in outliving the spoken word and the passing event.” Durability is of particular import for us here since, as noted above, all of the pharaonic-period ceramic female figurines thus far excavated by Johns Hopkins from the Mut Precinct are fragmentary.

Because “pottery firing causes a change in state from a plastic to an aplastic material,”²⁸⁷ female figurines fashioned from clay that have been fired in a kiln can be regarded as solid objects of pottery (or ceramic), no longer able to be manipulated in a malleable manner. While it has been demonstrated above that additions can be made to ceramic figurines post-firing (applications of pigment, threading of string and bead hair, embellishment with metal or faience jewelry or linen wrappings), the size, shape, and mass of a fired clay figurine remains constant once it emerges from the kiln. Only secondary manipulation such as breakage – whether accidental or intentional – or adornment will change the basic structure and appearance of a ceramic figurine.

Objects of fired Nile silt or marl clay have varying degrees of hardness (degree of resistance to surface scratching) and strength (measure of the response to stresses over the entire body).²⁸⁸ The authors of the Vienna System relate that, “As a general rule marl clay fabrics are harder than Nile clays.”²⁸⁹

As noted above, the majority of the ceramic female figurines excavated by Johns Hopkins from the Mut Precinct are fashioned from Nile silt B2 of the Vienna System, whose hardness the authors categorize as varying “from medium to hard” and whose transverse strength ranges

²⁸⁶ Rice, *Pottery Analysis*, 354.

²⁸⁷ Bourriau, Nicholson and Rose, “Pottery.” *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*, 127, citing Nicholson in Fascicle 1 of *An Introduction to Ancient Egyptian Pottery* (1993).

²⁸⁸ Rice, *Pottery Analysis*, 354, 357; Bourriau, Nicholson and Rose, “Pottery,” 129.

²⁸⁹ Nordström and Bourriau, 165.

“from medium to great.”²⁹⁰ Vessels and figurines of Nile B2 may thus be regarded as quite resistant to both scratching and breakage, and the fact that Nile B2 was used for all manner of storage, cooking and dining ware²⁹¹ suggests that the fabric was considered durable enough to withstand everyday use and transport, as well as repeated exposure to cooking fire. In short, Nile B2 was not a soft or easily friable fabric.

While figurines of Nile B2 might be regarded as less durable than vessels of the same material due to their smaller size, varying shape and thickness, and applied embellishments, and would certainly have had intrinsic areas of structural weakness (i.e. the thin arms of some Type 3's, the lower legs which taper to a point on several types), they were still, overall, made of a core material that could withstand frequent handling and would have to be subjected to significant applied stress before breaking. As Anna Stevens has remarked, “It was probably not particularly easy to break pottery figurines; they would often have survived a fall onto a mud-brick or plaster surface, for example.”²⁹²

It is important to note that although certain elements of Nile silt female figurines might have been susceptible to *accidental* breakage, the figurines as a whole were not manufactured so as to facilitate deliberate breakage. They were not manufactured with pressure points or intentional weak spots that would make their fragmentation an easy feat. In other words, female figures of Nile silt were not manufactured for the sole purpose of being broken.²⁹³ Instead, from their solid manufacture, we must conclude that the figurines were constructed as durable, hand-held objects resistant to breakage. Such durability would be necessary for the scenario proposed here, in which female figures were held by a practitioner and/or patient during a healing ritual while magical spells were recited over it. The figure would have had to remain intact throughout this portion of the ritual in order to effectively perform its magical duty to alleviate or repel a disease.

Marl clay fabric, of which five of the Mut Precinct figurines are made, is materially harder and stronger than Nile silt, and thus more difficult to break. Marl A2 is “very dense...and extremely hard with great transverse strength.”²⁹⁴ Marl A4 has varying degrees of hardness, and

²⁹⁰ Nordström and Bourriau, 172.

²⁹¹ Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 49; Nordström and Bourriau, 172-173.

²⁹² *Private Religion at Amarna*, 314.

²⁹³ I am grateful to Dr. Elizabeth Bloch-Smith for bringing this manufacturing possibility to my attention.

²⁹⁴ Nordström and Bourriau, 176.

transverse strength from medium to great.²⁹⁵ Like the Nile silt examples, the marl figurines from the Mut Precinct were solidly constructed without intentional weak points, and yet exhibit clean breakage at their most durable locales: our Type 1 figurine (cat. no. 1, **Fig. 1** above) is broken cleanly through the torso, just above the navel, while retaining some of its more fragile details, such as the breasts, pierced ears, and nose. Figurine VIII G West VI North extension B 1/25/03 (cat. no. 35) is also broken laterally above the navel, as well as across the shoulders, with the neck and head missing. Breakage of this nature would have required significant pressure, and is localized so as to suggest intentional snapping.

While much more will be said regarding the ritual nature of the Mut figurines' breakage below, it is imperative to repeat in this technological discussion that for complete figurines – including the women-on-a-bed Type 2's – the trunk or torso-hip region of the woman represents the thickest part of the figure, its strongest structural point, and thus the most difficult to break, requiring direct, applied pressure or stress.²⁹⁶ Female figurines like the Mut Precinct examples would not have broken cleanly in two at the torso or hip region if dropped, whether accidentally or otherwise,²⁹⁷ although this is the most frequent locale for breakage in the Mut Precinct corpus. Furthermore, it is unlikely that more fragile details of the figures like the ears, applied arms or breasts, or the head and neck would remain intact if a fall was damaging enough to break a figurine at its strongest structural point. The retention of finer (i.e. structurally weaker) details of a figurine, when observed in combination with clean breakage through the thick body of the figure, must signal purposely-enacted destruction.

²⁹⁵ Nordström and Bourriau, 177-178.

²⁹⁶ Noted also by Jean Jacquet for the ceramic female figurines from North Karnak in *Karnak Nord IX*, 62, n.101: "La presque totalité des figurines féminines sont cassées à la hauteur du tronc. On peut se demander si cette cassure qui a eu lieu à l'endroit le moins vulnérable de l'objet n'a pas été intentionnellement à un moment donné de son utilisation." It is exactly this question that I am addressing with this study.

²⁹⁷ An unfortunate accident during the January 2004 season confirms this: figurine fragment VIII G West VI Extension 3 2/8/03 (cat. no. 7), already broken when excavated in a clean diagonal across the lower torso/upper pubic area (its thickest part), was unintentionally dropped from a height of approximately one meter onto a hard surface. This resulted in a fresh, very jagged and irregular breakage of the lower leg/foot region (see cat. no. 7, c). It is therefore unlikely that the torso-area breakage already present when the figurine was found was achieved by dropping, because the more fragile, less thick, lower leg area would likely have broken first. Its initial, ancient breakage was almost certainly intentional.

As the midpoint of an approximately 15-20 centimeter-long ceramic female figure (the maximum length of the Mut Precinct exemplars when intact), the trunk is, in fact, a likely area for intentional breakage if we consider the possible mechanisms. We can imagine a person gripping a female figure horizontally in two hands and then snapping it at its midpoint, using pressure applied from both hands to break the figure into two roughly equal parts. Such breakage could also have been achieved if the figurine was laid on a hard surface and then deliberately and precisely smashed at its mid-section with a pestle,²⁹⁸ hammer, or similar instrument, or cracked across a person's knee. The circumstances under which this seemingly ritualized breakage might have taken place will be elucidated later in this work.

The concept of durability as the ability to withstand the stresses of normal use can also be applied to the painted decoration present on many Egyptian female figurines. As highlighted above, the red wash detected on a number of the Hopkins-excavated figurines, because it was applied post-firing, has a tendency to fade, either through use or from centuries of exposure to soil and the elements. Its thin application and fragility prevent the excavator from utilizing it to detect use-wear patterns, and, as at other sites,²⁹⁹ a number of the female figurines from the Mut Precinct were only recognized after having been washed as presumed potsherds, and so might have lost their red coatings during that process. The red coating on these figurines is therefore one of their least durable aspects, although statistics and comparisons between sites have enabled excavators to presume that a red wash was present on the majority of New Kingdom and later female figurines (excepting polychrome examples), as has been done here. Such a red wash can also be analyzed for its symbolic meaning (see section 2.4 below).

Because “polychrome painted decoration does not have the tenacity of that fired on to the pot,”³⁰⁰ the multicolored paint present on a number of the Mut Precinct ceramic female figurines also cannot be regarded as a particularly durable aspect of the objects. However, the frequent presence

²⁹⁸ The Egyptian ritual of “Breaking the Red Vessels” utilizes this method, as seen from the very specific hieroglyphic determinative attached to the verb *sq* “to break” in the Merenre version of Pyramid Text Utterance 249b, which shows the upper body of a man holding a pestle in both hands and bringing it down on a mortar: Jacobus van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ* VI: 1389; Alexandre Moret, “Le Rite de *Briser Les Vases Rouges* au Temple de Louxor,” *Revue d'égyptologie* 3 (1938) 167. More on Egyptian rites involving breakage will be said in section 2.4 below.

²⁹⁹ i.e. Memphis/Kom Rabi'a: Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 31.

³⁰⁰ Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 28.

of these impermanent washes and pigments on the Mut Precinct figurines begs the question: did painted ceramic female figurines, given the tendency for the applied color(s) to fade, have limited use for their owners?

There are, in fact, two related and overwhelming indications – one material, one archaeological – that the polychrome (and other) figurines being considered here had a limited period of use for their owners: their almost ubiquitous breakage, and their frequent appearance in archaeologically-excavated refuse zones.

Unlike the complete (or nearly-complete) polychrome painted vessels excavated mainly from tombs and retaining near-pristine decoration, polychrome painted female figurines have been found in domestic, temple and tomb settings, including individual tombs and houses, as well as in refuse zones. Such figurines are most often found in fragments, and frequently bear traces but not all of their original painted decoration. While it is tempting to see the faint traces of pigment remaining on a figurine as evidence for its repeated use or handling, as with the red wash, this decoration was not particularly resilient, and should not be regarded as reflecting use-wear patterns.³⁰¹

However, it is the strategically-placed and deliberate breakage of these and all types of New Kingdom and later ceramic figurines, strongly evidenced in the Mut Precinct corpus, which suggests that the figurines were of limited use to their owners. At a crucial moment in their ‘object life,’ these figurines were destroyed by forcibly breaking them into two or more pieces, either by hand or with a percussion tool. This was most likely a ritual act with symbolic overtones, part of more elaborate healing or apotropaic ritual to cure a sick person or safeguard a living or working space.³⁰²

The limited period of use for a given female figurine, then, would be the time between its acquisition from a workshop, and the occasion an individual was in need of a cure, or a space was in need of protection, and the figurine was employed (and destroyed) as part of a magical ritual. This period could have been as long as several years, or as brief as a one-day or several-hour span, and probably cannot be reconstructed with any certainty. Broadly speaking, however, the material evidence strongly supports the conclusion that these female figurines were of limited use: they were acquired, perhaps stored, and then utilized at an opportune moment.

³⁰¹ For very obvious use-wear patterns in a corpus of magical objects, see Annie Gasse, *Les stèles d'Horus sur les crocodiles*. Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 2004. 22.

³⁰² The textual evidence for this will be discussed in the following chapter.

Further evidence for a limited period of use for New Kingdom and later ceramic female figurines is their extremely frequent excavation in areas of debris, not only at the Mut Precinct, but also at sites like Memphis³⁰³ and Amarna. Barry Kemp has published a diagram of the Workmen's Village at Amarna that indicates where what he calls "expendable" ceramic female figurines (almost certainly fragments thereof³⁰⁴), as well as ceramic model beds, have been excavated (**Fig. 9**).³⁰⁵

³⁰³ Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 31.

³⁰⁴ Fragmentary female figurines from the Workmen's Village and from Q48.4, the pottery workshop that supplied the village, are illustrated in Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 261 fig. III.1.1 and 266 fig. III.1.2.

³⁰⁵ "How Religious were the Ancient Egyptians?" *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 5 (1) (1995) 31, fig. 3.

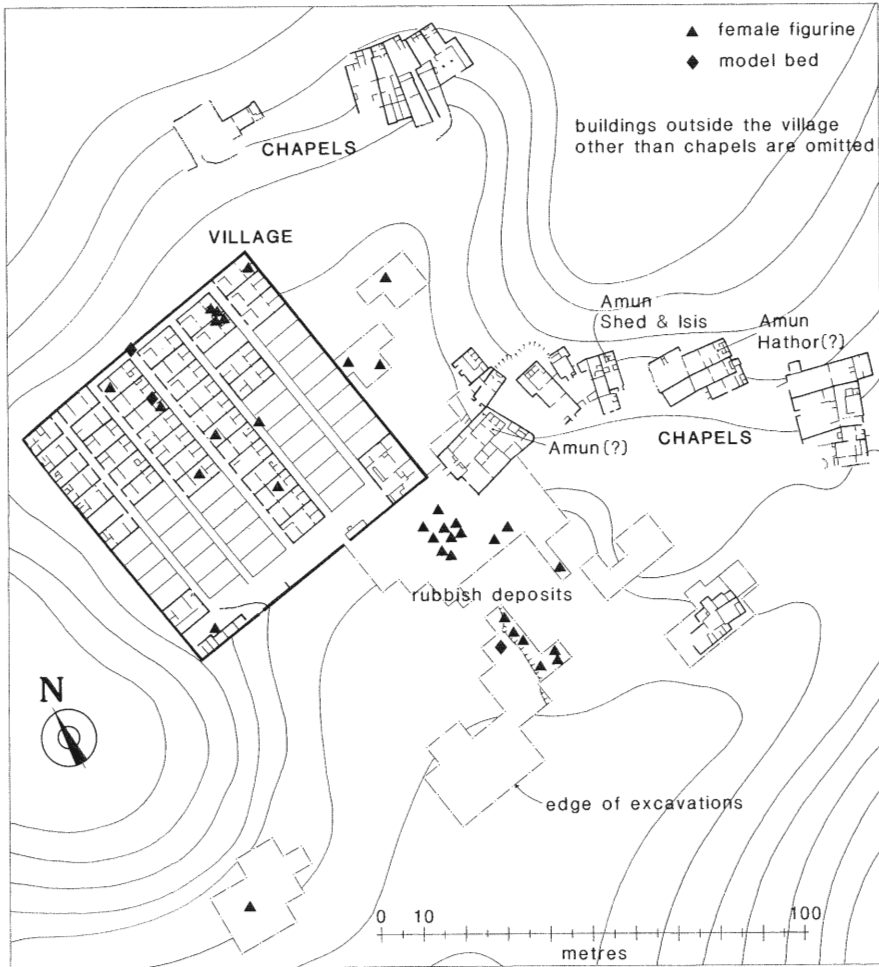


Fig. 9: Amarna Workmen's Village, with female figurine findspots indicated (after Barry J. Kemp, "How Religious were the Ancient Egyptians?" *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 5:1 (1995) 31, fig. 3, reproduced with permission of Cambridge University Press)

It can be plainly seen in this illustration that not only were female figurines found in or around houses, but many were also found outside of the walled village in the zone marked "rubbish deposits." Kemp relates that the female figures "clearly belonged amongst domestic rather than chapel debris," thus separating the figurines from the formal religion of the villagers and placing them in a more individual sphere. Kemp extrapolates from this archaeological evidence that, "Within this community [the figurines] seem

to have had only temporary utility and retained no permanent sacredness which might lead to them being deposited in or buried near a sanctuary.”³⁰⁶ Kemp’s analysis of the Amarna Workmen’s Village evidence can be applied to all sites from which significant numbers of ceramic female figurines of the New Kingdom and later have been excavated, including the Mut Precinct. Although domestic installations have not been found at the Mut Precinct, the figurines from the site show the same expendability as the Amarna figures, having been found neither in the main temple, nor in any architecturally defined spaces on its periphery, but in zones of refuse. **Figure 10** shows the locations within the Mut Precinct where fragments of female figurines have been excavated by the Johns Hopkins Expedition.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁶ Kemp, “How Religious,” 30. Kemp’s analysis of discarded religious material from the village is also discussed in Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 314

³⁰⁷ The reader should be aware that some excavation locations - most notably the IX G West units at the far south of the precinct - are not present on this plan. Thus, one large star has been used to indicate the general IX G West area from which ten female figurines derive. All other stars denote more precise female figurine findspots.

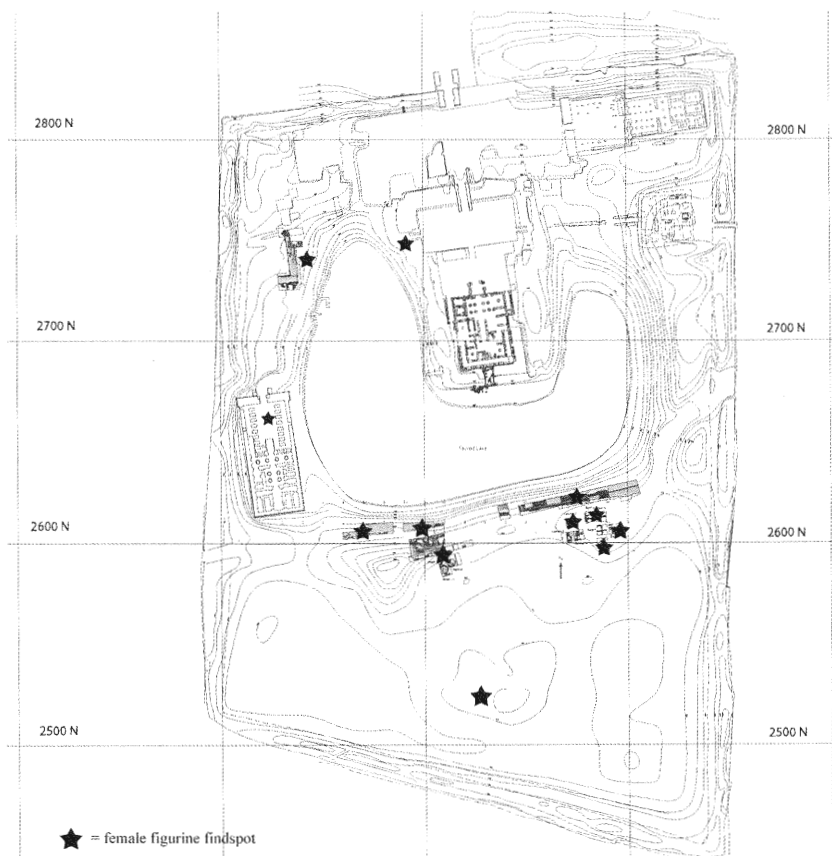


Fig. 10: Plan of the Mut Precinct, with female figurine findspots indicated

It should be noted that the only figurine fragment found near the Mut Temple proper (cat. no. 33) is from a liminal space, a gateway at the far west of the First Court of the sanctuary, and is the lower half of a female only. The rest are, as already noted, from pottery dumps, industrial refuse areas, and surface debris, being concentrated behind the temple's sacred lake. We may therefore glean from both their archaeological context and their ubiquitous breakage that the ceramic female figures from the Mut Precinct were of similar limited use as that which Kemp has proposed for the figurines from the Amarna Workmen's Village. It appears that ceramic female figures were utilized by persons employed within the Mut Temple precinct, and were subsequently discarded along with other industrial refuse

following their destruction in what was likely a magical, health-related ritual.

2.3 Standardization and Distribution of the Figurines

2.3.1 *Standardization*

That a corpus of 42 recently-excavated female figurine fragments can, by and large, be fitted into a six-part typology speaks to the fact that uniform styles were imposed on figurine manufacturers during the New Kingdom, Third Intermediate Period, and Late Period. The specific evidence for female figurine standardization, as revealed by the Mut Precinct corpus, will be detailed here.

First, on a material level, we have already noted that all but five of the Mut Precinct female figurines were fashioned from Nile silt clay. While Nile silt was the most readily available clay for Egyptian potters working in the Nile Valley, it was also a conscious choice on the part of the manufacturers to utilize this clay for female figurines, as the Egyptians had no shortage of materials from which to fashion anthropomorphic images.³⁰⁸ We may never know who set fired clay as the standard material for the majority of female figurines produced during the New Kingdom and later – if indeed it was a calculated decision – but we can observe that after the Middle Kingdom, fired Nile silt was the preferred material for nude female figurines.

The standardization of the handmade, marl clay, Type 1 figurines perhaps deserves little further comment, as it is obvious from their material, measurements, method of manufacture, and striking visual appearance that these figurines were fashioned to a set size, shape and look, with such slight variations that they can be easily recognized as a standard type.³⁰⁹ This

³⁰⁸ Aldred, *Egyptian Art*, 22-26. Note, with reference to female figurines, that some Predynastic figures were carved from ivory, embellished with incised and punctate decoration, and could be adorned with lapis lazuli eyes, e.g. A.J. Spencer, *Early Egypt: The Rise of Civilization in the Nile Valley*. London: Published for the Trustees of the British Museum by British Museum Press, 1993. frontispiece, 25, 33, and figs. 9, 15. Others were carved entirely from lapis lazuli: Edith Porada, "A Lapis Lazuli Figurines from Hierakonpolis in Egypt." *Iranica Antiqua* 15 (1980) 175-179. Ivory figurines are also known from the pharaonic period, e.g. Oscar Muscarella, ed. *Ancient Art: The Norbert Schimmel Collection*. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag P. von Zabern. 1974. no. 170, as are abundant examples of faience, stone and wood female figurines: Elizabeth A. Waraksa, "Female Figurines (Pharaonic Period)." *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*. Ed. Willeke Wendrich. Los Angeles, 2008. <<http://repositories.cdlib.org/nelc/uee/1033/>>; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 198-199, 226-227.

³⁰⁹ These figures are Pinch's Type 3: *Votive Offerings*, 201-203, 228-229.

standardization has already been much remarked upon by Geraldine Pinch, Pascale Ballet, the Gebel Zeit excavators,³¹⁰ and others, and we will consider the wide diffusion of this type of figurine in the Distribution section of the chapter below.

Further evidence for the standardization of Egyptian ceramic female figurines of the New Kingdom and later is the fact that the majority were molded, a method of manufacture already highlighted above as one used to (repeatedly) create objects of a uniform size, shape and appearance. Although no two Mut Precinct figurines are alike, the Type 2-5 fragments all preserve the clear details of having been molded, and, as previously mentioned, molds for similar figurines have been excavated from Amarna, Deir el-Medina and Hermopolis. The fact that in the early New Kingdom, molding was introduced as a method of manufacturing female figurines, and that through the New Kingdom and beyond, molded types are present in Upper, Middle and Lower Egypt, provides evidence that figurine size, shape and method of manufacture was standardized by an institution. We might conjecture that this institution was the same one supplying and/or overseeing the pottery workshops wherein these molded figurines were made.

Post-molding decoration of ceramic female figurines fashioned from Nile silt further facilitates the detection of standardized types. As explicated in detail above, the Type 2 (women-on-a-bed) polychrome painted figurines seem to have been produced in large royal centers with the cooperation of potters, who had access to clay, molds and kilns, and painters, who had access to a variety of pigments and were familiar with the iconographic repertoire of the mid-18th to mid-20th Dynasties. Thus, the limited chronological horizon and concentrated geographical distribution of these polychrome painted figures, combined with their specific and detailed materials and iconography, strongly suggest standardization at the institutional and elite, if not royal, level.

The incised and applied decoration present on the Type 3-5 figurines also reveals standardization in their respective periods. Whereas all of these types of figurines found at the Mut Precinct were molded in a half mold from Nile silt, it is their subsequent embellishment, executed in what is certainly a set formula, that reveals standardization. Type 3 figurines feature females with long applied wigs, the individual plaits incised into the wet clay, applied button eyes and breasts, and thin, somewhat spindly arms luted onto molded bodies with exaggerated hip

³¹⁰ Castel et al. "Découverte de mines pharaoniques au bord de la Mer Rouge" *Archéologia* 192-3 (July/Aug 1984) 26.

regions. The prominent hip and pubic area of the Type 3's is further highlighted by an incised triangle and individually rendered hairs.

Type 4 figurines seem to have had a body shape and decoration similar to the Type 3 standard, but a variation in the rendering of the head. For Type 4 figurines, the standard was a severely truncated head, made by pinching a knob of clay between two fingers. This rendering of the head is in remarkable contrast to the Type 1-3 female heads, with their detailed hair and wigs, although the Type 4's do retain the Type 3 standard of round applied eyes set into oval depressions.

The more streamlined Type 5 or "pancake" style figurines appear to develop out of the Type 3 and 4 body types. Their change in thickness and smooth appearance must have been an industry standard for the Late Period. The hip and pubic area of the Type 5 females is still the most prominent feature, but is not as exaggerated as that of the Type 3. The attenuation of Type 5 female figurines, compared with many earlier examples, is their uniform characteristic.

Finally, the extremely exaggerated incised pubic triangle and hairs of the Type 6 figurines, with its stark difference from the prominent yet still proportional pubic regions of the Type 3-5 figurines, again signals a decoration standard for these figures. Yet more evidence for conscious change in the figurine manufacturing process includes the smaller size of the Type 6 examples and their individuated feet.

The argument for a countrywide standardization of ceramic female figurine types during the New Kingdom and later is bolstered by the fact that, with the exception of the Type 6 figurines, all of the above-noted types have been found at sites outside of the Karnak Precinct. Type 1 figurines have been found in the widest geographical range of all of the Mut Precinct types: as far south as Faras in Nubia, as far north as the Memphite region, and as far east as the galena mines of Gebel Zeit on the Red Sea coast.³¹¹ This extremely broad distribution has already prompted scholars to engage in a detailed discussion of the figurines' possible loci of manufacture and mechanisms of diffusion. These issues will be further addressed below. As already noted in section 2.1, Type 2 polychrome painted figurines have been found in large numbers at the major New Kingdom royal cities of Memphis, Amarna, Gurob, and Thebes. The one Type 2 figurine from the Mut Precinct that has been provisionally dated to the Third Intermediate Period (cat. no. 4) has its closest parallels at Elephantine.³¹²

³¹¹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 228-229.

³¹² See catalogue (**Appendix A**).

Type 3 figurines with the same incised and applied elements as the Mut Precinct examples have been excavated elsewhere in the Karnak complex, across the Nile on the West bank of Thebes, and in Middle Egypt at el-Ashmunein,³¹³ signaling a standardization that was recognized at least as far north as Middle Egypt.

Type 4 figurines, with their characteristic “pinched” heads, have to date been tracked on both sides of the river at Thebes. Type 5 figurines are more widely attested, having been excavated at Thebes and at Hermopolis.³¹⁴ The Type 6 figurines from the Mut Precinct, as already noted in Chapter 1, are currently without known comparanda, although they are present in significant enough numbers to suggest that they are not one-offs, and comparative figurines should be sought at other sites.

A third method for detecting standardization, already suggested in this section, is to note the average length, width, and thickness of ceramic female figurines for given chronological periods. Indeed the measurements of figurines, in addition to their materials, methods of manufacture, and decoration, appear to have been standardized, a logical fact given the introduction of molding. The measurements provided in the catalogue (**Appendix A**) for the Mut Precinct, when compared with similar figurines, confirm this.

We may conclude from this study that the standard forms of ceramic female figurines, which were likely developed and certainly implemented in major royal cities such as Thebes, were recognized countrywide. This is evidenced by the fact that figurines of all but one of the Mut Precinct types have been found beyond the Karnak complex, and in many instances beyond greater Thebes, reaching as far as Memphis, Nubia, and the Eastern Desert in some cases. Even if these unquestionably portable objects were fashioned to the current standard at one site (i.e. a major royal town in the Nile Valley) and then distributed by human transport to others, the standard itself still had to have been recognized and desired by those living outside the center(s) of manufacture,³¹⁵ and owning the standard female figure of the day was probably regarded as an integral factor in achieving the desired magical effect from the object.

³¹³ See catalogue (**Appendix A**).

³¹⁴ François Leclère and Sylvie Marchand, “Données Complémentaires sur les structures de Briques Crues Rubéfiées du Musée de Plein Air de Karnak.” *Karnak X* (1995) 365 and pl. XIII; Günther Roeder, *Hermopolis 1929-1939. Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Hermopolis-Expedition in Hermopolis, Ober-Ägypten, in Verbindung mit zahlreichen Mitarbeitern*. Hildesheim: Verlag Gebrüder Gerstenberg, 1959. Pl. 47 h, i.

³¹⁵ See also the remarks of Stevens regarding a common religious ‘language’ across the country: *Private Religion at Amarna*, 269.

2.3.2 *Distribution*

In her recent study connecting figurine production with pottery ateliers, Pascale Ballet includes remarks on the obvious standardization (“une certaine homogénéité iconographique et technique”) and possible pattern of distribution for the Gebel Zeit figures.³¹⁶ Specifically, Ballet queries whether these figurines might be products of specialized centers.³¹⁷ Noting that Gebel Zeit/Type 1 figures are largely manifest in Upper Egypt,³¹⁸ and that their clay type (marl³¹⁹) was used for vessels in the region throughout the pharaonic and into the Graeco-Roman period,³²⁰ Ballet concludes that, “Les figurines du Gebel Zeit appartiennent à une large groupe de statuettes façonnées, selon toute vraisemblance, en Haute-Égypte et plus particulièrement dans la région thébaine....”³²¹ Ballet’s scenario for the Gebel Zeit figurines will be discussed in greater detail below. Here, however, I note its similarity to the more general remarks of Geraldine Pinch, who states in her monograph that, “In theory, votive objects could have been manufactured in some central workshop, probably in Thebes, and distributed to temples all over Egypt and its empire.”³²²

The above quotation would seem to suggest that Pinch advocates centralized Theban manufacture and subsequent outward distribution for ceramic female figurines, one of the many classes of ‘votive’ objects included in her monograph, although she duly notes that some faience pieces appear to have been locally-made, as at Serabit el-Khadim.³²³ However, a close reading reveals that Pinch wavers on the issue of centralized figurine production throughout the ‘Manufacturing and Distribution’ portion of her study.

In a general discussion, Pinch first states that, “Given the degree of uniformity between the Hathor offerings, it seems safest to assume that most New Kingdom small votive objects were made in temple or other state

³¹⁶ Ballet, “Potiers et fabricants,” 115. The Gebel Zeit figurines correspond to Type 1 at the Mut Precinct and Pinch’s Type 3.

³¹⁷ Ballet, “Potiers et fabricants,” 115.

³¹⁸ For a convenient list of sites, see Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 228-229.

³¹⁹ Identified here as Marl A2; see above, section 2.2.

³²⁰ Ballet, “Potiers et fabricants,” 115; Bourriau, Nicholson and Rose (“Pottery,” 131) note that the distribution of the Marl A fabric group, “strongly suggests an Upper Egyptian origin, probably in the Theban area.”

³²¹ Ballet, “Potiers et fabricants,” 115.

³²² Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 330-331.

³²³ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 331.

workshops..."³²⁴ Here, like Ballet, she highlights the homogeneity of the objects, which includes female figurines, as an indication of their mass-production in large, centralized workshops.

In the following paragraph, however, Pinch turns specifically to female figurines and states that, "It...seems implausible that fertility figurines, which belong to the sphere of folk religion, would have been made in temple workshops."³²⁵ This is a peculiar assessment which seemingly contradicts her earlier statement, and rests heavily on Pinch's definition of 'folk religion' as, "Religious or magical beliefs and practices of the populace, independent of the state cults and centered on the home and family."³²⁶

Pinch seems undecided on the exact nature of nude female figurines when attempting to site their locus of manufacture. Although she is discussing a class of object that – as she, herself, has documented – is attested at a wide range of locales, including state-sponsored temples, Pinch here seems to divorce the figurines from any connection they might have to state institutions, and thus relegates both their use, and their manufacture, to the domestic sphere. Indeed, Pinch seems unable to resolve the figurines' obvious uniformity and presence within state-sponsored temples, which favor manufacture at a highly organized level and a link with state religion, with her evaluation of the objects as manifestations of a domestic concern with female fertility. In fact, in her chapter section summary, Pinch reiterates her ambivalent stance, stating that while, "There is evidence that even faience fertility figurines...were made by temples...Some offerings, such as pottery fertility figurines, may have been made by craftsmen in the donors' communities who knew the appropriate forms and rituals."³²⁷

The above discussion illustrates some of the major flaws in Pinch's assessment of ceramic female figurines: her misrepresentation and selective use their excavated contexts; her very narrow definition of the figurines as votive offerings concerned with women's fecundity; and her inability to decide whether the figurines belong to 'folk' (i.e. domestic) religion, state religion, or perhaps moved between both.

It seems clear that a more fluid understanding of the function and meaning of these figurines is needed, one that goes beyond the limited scope of Pinch's votive hypothesis and takes into account their standardized

³²⁴ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 329.

³²⁵ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 329.

³²⁶ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 325.

³²⁷ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 332.

manufacture, variable find spots, and condition when excavated. The broader, magico-medical use for ceramic female figurines suggested here not only recognizes the figurines' standard forms through time and advocates their production in and distribution from a highly-organized workshop, but it also regards their presence in temple, mortuary, and domestic environs as indicative of the wide applicability of these objects to the concerns of everyday Egyptian life. This study also takes the ceramic figurines' frequent breakage as evidence of both a destructive rite, as well as their limited perceived usefulness. Textual sources in the form of spells contained within magico-medical papyri also exist to support this thesis, and will be detailed in the following chapter.

Within her 'Manufacturing and Distribution' section, Pinch uses evidence that supports figurine manufacture at centralized workshops to instead imply that craftsmen anywhere in the country could produce the objects. Pinch cites "the general Egyptian tendency to standardization," as well as the figurine mold found at Deir el-Medina and the unfired figurine from Amarna, as indications that, "it is likely most communities had a craftsman who knew the standard forms for fertility figurines and was able to reproduce them."³²⁸ With this statement, Pinch acknowledges that, as with many classes of Egyptian art, a figurine standard was set, and yet she also seems to suggest that the standard was then diffused to de-centralized craftsmen working in villages throughout Egypt.

Here, Pinch overlooks the fact that Deir el-Medina and Amarna, from which her evidence derives, were not 'most communities.' Deir el-Medina was, of course, part of greater Thebes, one of the major New Kingdom royal cities, and Amarna was a royal capital in its own right during the reign of Akhenaten. That Deir el-Medina and Amarna contained remnants of figurine manufacture would thus seem to fit Pinch's original, general model of centralized workshop production for such small, standardized objects.

It is well known that the villages of Deir el-Medina and Amarna were heavily sponsored by the Crown, were often at the forefront of creating the standard artworks of the day, and had a high proportion of residents who were trained artisans.³²⁹ As noted above with respect to the polychrome painted Type 2 figurines, Deir el-Medina and Amarna are undoubtedly two of the best geographical candidates for communities of craftsmen that were capable of not only 'reproducing' the figurine types of

³²⁸ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 330.

³²⁹ Eyre, "Work and the Organisation of Work in the New Kingdom," 167-180, 192-195; Eaton-Krauss, "Artists and Artisans," 139-140.

the day, but of implementing the figurine standards at the moment they were set by the (yet-to-be-identified, but possibly royal) regulating body. In truth, most small New Kingdom communities and peripheral sites, like mining outposts and forts, probably received ceramic female figurines that were distributed outwards from larger production centers like Thebes. As P.R.S. Moorey has noted, "There is no clear evidence for completely independent specialist craftsmen trading on their own account in the Late Bronze Age."³³⁰ Although she sometimes uses it to the contrary, the evidence that Pinch cites in her 'Manufacturing and Distribution' discussion advocates figurine production as the prerogative of royal centers.

With specific regard to the Gebel Zeit corpus of figurines, Pinch again wavers in her manufacturing and distribution model. She first notes that the French excavators of Gebel Zeit favor the Theban region, and specifically Koptos, as the point of departure for the miners, as well as the locus of manufacture for the finds from the site.³³¹ This likely supposition is based on a number of inscribed monuments from the site, including a fragment of a Middle Kingdom limestone stela showing a 12th Dynasty king offering to Min of Koptos, a 17th dynasty stela fragment showing the Nomarch of Koptos, Minemhat, and abundant beads, scarabs, seals and rings with the names of 18th and 19th dynasty pharaohs, including Akhenaten and Ramesses II.³³² In addition, the two *wadi* routes leading from the Theban region to the Red Sea make it highly likely that this area was the point of origin for the galena mining expeditions.³³³

Pinch then adds to the excavators' remarks by suggesting that some of the small finds from Gebel Zeit "...may have been acquired from temples or temple craftsmen at these sites [i.e. Koptos and Thebes],"³³⁴ here favoring a temple workshop as the objects' locus of manufacture. This is an appealing model if we envision the miners both departing from and returning to a temple setting in the Nile Valley on their mission to extract galena, which was used in the production of eye paint and the glass and

³³⁰ P.R.S. Moorey, "The mobility of artisans and opportunities for technology transfer between Western Asia and Egypt in the Late Bronze Age." *The Social Context of Technological Change: Egypt and the Near East, 1650-1550 BC*. Ed. Andrew J. Shortland. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2001. 4.

³³¹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 74-75, 329.

³³² Castel et al. "Gebel Zeit: Pharaonische Bergwerke," 28; Castel and Soukiassian, "Les Mines de Galene du Gebel Zeit." *Akten des vierten Internationalen Ägyptologen Kongresses München 1985*. Ed. Sylvia Schoske. Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, 1988-1991. 2: 169; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 74.

³³³ Castel et al. "Gebel Zeit: Pharaonische Bergwerke," 28.

³³⁴ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 329.

faience colorant lead antimonite.³³⁵ The temple atelier to which the miners delivered the raw galena may have been the same general outfit from which they acquired the elaborate female figurines and other small objects left at the Gebel Zeit site. It is known that in the New Kingdom, the Temple of Amun at Karnak sent numerous expeditions to extract galena from the Eastern Desert,³³⁶ and it seems likely that this institution, and perhaps a similar temple at Koptos, was both a state sponsor of the galena mining activities, as well as a primary manufacturer of eye paint, faience and glass items colored yellow by galena, and ceramic female figurines.

Oddly, however, Pinch qualifies her above statement regarding temple craftsmen as the producers of the Gebel Zeit objects by later stating that, "royal workshops did not supply expeditions to Gebel Zeit."³³⁷ For this conclusion, she cites the relative paucity of Second Intermediate Period and New Kingdom royal name faience at the site.³³⁸ This is a bit perplexing, however, given that she has already advocated a scenario in which temple workshops in Koptos and/or Thebes, which would almost certainly have been government-sponsored, supplied the galena miners with portable objects of rather uniform style. It is also a curious statement given that the royal and nomarchal names attested at the site (reviewed in detail by Pinch), although not numerous, nevertheless span from the late Middle Kingdom to the early Ramesside period,³³⁹ indicating continuous and dedicated efforts on the part of Egyptian rulers to exploit the galena mines.

While it may be true that the temple workshops charged with manufacturing inscribed stelae, scarabs, and other objects in the Second Intermediate Period were not massive 'royal' institutions like those in operation during the more stable New Kingdom, the ateliers that produced objects like those found at Gebel Zeit were still likely sponsored and

³³⁵ Shortland, Nicholson and Jackson, "Glass and faience at Amarna," 154; Shortland, Nicholson and Jackson, "Lead isotopic analysis of the 18th dynasty Egyptian eyepaints and lead antimonite colorants." *Archaeometry* 42 (2000) 153-157; Nicholson, *Egyptian Faience and Glass*, 31-32.

³³⁶ Barry J. Kemp, "Temple and Town in Ancient Egypt." *Man, Settlement and Urbanism: proceedings of a meeting of the Research Seminar in Archaeology and Related Subjects held at the Institute of Archaeology, London University*. Eds. Peter J. Ucko, Ruth Tringham and G.W. Dimbleby. London: Duckworth, 1972. 658-659; Alexander J. Peden, *Egyptian Historical Inscriptions of the Twentieth Dynasty*. Jonsered: Paul Åströms förlag, 1994. 101-110; Wolfgang Helck, "Eine Briefsammlung aus der Verwaltung des Amuntempels." *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 6 (1967) 135-138.

³³⁷ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 332.

³³⁸ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 331-332.

³³⁹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 74-77.

supplied by regional rulers. Thus, hypothesizing that the Gebel Zeit objects were manufactured to uniform standards by a *non-royal* temple workshop, as Pinch does, is unnecessarily splitting hairs: the standardized objects found at the mining site – in particular the elaborate female figurines – suggest that a well-equipped, well-organized, local or regional (although perhaps not technically ‘royal’ in some periods) government-sponsored temple workshop is their locus of manufacture.

Pinch’s reason for removing a larger authority from the manufacturing scenario of the Gebel Zeit objects again appears to be tied to her belief that female figurines, in particular, belong to “the sphere of popular religion.”³⁴⁰ While the figurines may, in fact, have been a part of – to use Pinch’s definition – “the religious beliefs and practices, whether corporate or individual, of ordinary Egyptians in daily life,” this does not necessarily mean that the objects themselves had to be manufactured in a daily life (i.e. a domestic or extra-governmental) setting. Objects like ceramic female figurines – obviously utilized with great frequency from the Second Intermediate Period on, given their great abundance and ubiquity – could certainly have been acquired by private persons from highly-organized temple ateliers, and subsequently used in a more private fashion. This appears to be the case at Gebel Zeit.

Pinch’s apparent non-royal (or non-governmental) designation for the manufacturers of the Gebel Zeit small finds can further be countered by the Gebel Zeit female figurines themselves. The figures contain enough evidence in their material elaboration to support the notion of some level of governmental sponsorship for their production.

As noted previously, these figurines of baked marl clay, so well-preserved at the desert mining site and so surprisingly categorized by Pinch as “of crude workmanship,”³⁴¹ were hand-fashioned to a standard size and shape, fired in a kiln, and then further embellished with strands of linen hair adorned with mud or faience beads carefully threaded through the back of their heads, metal and faience jewelry on the ears and body, and fringed linen wrappings around the body. These adornments were not applied as raw materials, but had themselves to be manipulated and manufactured using various processes prior to their inclusion on a female figurine. For example, the ingredients for faience paste were first procured by royal expeditions before the scarabs and beads could be molded, fired, strung, and finally draped on the figurines, a process that surely involved a

³⁴⁰ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 77.

³⁴¹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 201.

significant number of expedition staff and craftsmen.³⁴² In addition, the raw silver for some earrings had to be imported, worked in a smith's forge, and then attached to the fired figurine, perhaps by soldering.³⁴³ Finally, the linen cloths were woven to a specific size and pattern, in some cases embellished with beads and color-dyed threads, and then wrapped around the figures.³⁴⁴ As Geraldine Pinch has noted in her study of votive textiles (including the wrappings found on some Gebel Zeit figurines), "All the cloths appear to have been specially woven, rather than adapted from other uses or cut from rolls of linen," and "...ancient Egyptian textiles with beads woven into the fabric are extremely rare."³⁴⁵ This multi-stage manufacturing process favors a collaborative workshop setting for the production of these figures.³⁴⁶ It should be emphasized that this workshop must have been in the Nile Valley and not at the remote mining site, where raw material save for galena was rare.³⁴⁷ Indeed, Pinch has herself postulated that the pieces of linen found at Gebel Zeit "may even have come from the same workshop that made the unpainted textiles found at Deir el-Bahri."³⁴⁸

³⁴² Robert Steven Bianchi, "Symbols and Meanings," *Gifts of the Nile: Ancient Egyptian Faience*, 22-23; Friedman, "Faience: The Brilliance of Eternity," *Gifts of the Nile: Ancient Egyptian Faience*, 17; Nicholson, *Egyptian Faience and Glass*, 28-32.

³⁴³ Peter Lacovara and Yvonne J. Markowitz, "Silver," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Donald B. Redford. New York: Oxford UP, 2001. III: 286-287.

³⁴⁴ Gillian M. Vogelsang-Eastwood, "Textiles," *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*. Eds. Paul T. Nicholson and Ian Shaw. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge UP, 2000. 268-298; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 201; Castel et al. "Gebel Zeit: Pharaonische Bergwerke," 20 and fig. 13.

³⁴⁵ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 116-117.

³⁴⁶ On faience as the product of a workshop setting: Friedman, "Faience: The Brilliance of Eternity," 17; Bianchi, "Symbols and Meanings," 22. On textiles as the products of workshops: Vogelsang-Eastwood, "Weaving, Looms, and Textiles," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Donald B. Redford. New York: Oxford UP, 2001. III: 491. On votive stelae and textiles found at Deir el-Bahri and Faras as the products of temple or state workshops, see Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 327, 329, 332, although note her ambiguous remarks about the production of female figurines, discussed in detail above.

³⁴⁷ The only objects identified by the Gebel Zeit excavators as locally made are calcite vessels and small stelae in local stone: Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 327; Castel et al. "Gebel Zeit: Pharaonische Bergwerke," 23; Georges Castel and George Soukiassian. "Dépôt de stèles dans le sanctuaire du Nouvel Empire au Gebel Zeit." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 85 (1985) 293. Shells, however, were also utilized at the site (as vessels and tools: Castel et al. "Gebel Zeit: Pharaonische Bergwerke," 23 and as offerings found in the sanctuary: Castel et al. "Découverte de mines pharaoniques au bord de la Mer Rouge," 48 Photo 3 and 49) and the small nerite (?) shells affixed to some figurines' linen hair could have been added at the site (see discussion below).

³⁴⁸ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 128.

As is clear, not only marl clay and a kiln were necessary to fashion a complete female figurine of the Gebel Zeit type. A whole range of material goods, made to the appropriate size and decorative specifications, needed to be on hand in order to adorn the figure. All of these materials could only have been acquired by a workshop of considerable sophistication. It is this material elaboration that tips the scales in favor of a well-equipped, state-run Nile Valley atelier complex as the manufacturing site of the Gebel Zeit, and all Type 1, figurines. The sophisticated workshop(s) was very probably located in the Theban vicinity (here taken to include the Qena bend region), the starting point for expeditions heading east, as well as the area from which the vast majority of this type of figurine has been excavated.³⁴⁹ The Karnak complex, and/or a similar outfit in the Koptos area, are very likely candidates for these workshops. Distribution outwards from the Theban vicinity, feasible both overland and by river, seems evident, and is the model favored here for the Type 1 figurines. It is also a pattern of distribution to be considered for a number of silt figurine types (Types 3-5), although these are more difficult to track for reasons to be discussed below.

The Thebano-centric manufacturing and distribution model for Gebel Zeit-type figurines discussed in this chapter section, which is advocated by Ballet and in part by Pinch, must acknowledge a very significant degree of state-sponsorship. This model is then consistent with the geographical, archaeological, textual, and material evidence. There remains, however, one last archaeological issue to be resolved: figurines of this type have also been found in Lower Egypt, at Abusir,³⁵⁰ and at Memphis/Kom Rabi'a, a New Kingdom settlement site that likely would have been capable of producing (or at least embellishing) its own vessels and female figurines.³⁵¹

While the Gebel Zeit-type figurines found at Abusir and Kom Rabi'a could have found their way to the Memphite area after having been produced in the Theban region, we also know that at least as early as the New Kingdom, ceramic ateliers capable of producing vessels of a standard form existed contemporaneously at Thebes and at Memphis.³⁵² Therefore, although the evidence is at the moment slight, we might consider extending

³⁴⁹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 228-229; Ballet, "Potiers et fabricants," 115.

³⁵⁰ Berlin 18 742, from tomb 1045: Alexander Scharff, *Die archäologischen Ergebnisse des vorgeschichtlichen Gräberfeldes von Abusir el-Meleq*. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1926. 95 and pl. 71, 528.

³⁵¹ Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 10.

³⁵² Hope, *Egyptian Pottery*, 8.

our model and leaving room for the possibility that female figurines like the Gebel Zeit type were produced in both northern and southern workshops. If true, this would indicate that a standardized manufacture of figurine types was implemented throughout the country, not only in Upper Egypt. And while the standard may have been set at Thebes, the archaeological evidence appears to indicate that this was the accepted figurine type for the Second Intermediate Period and early 18th Dynasty up and down the Nile Valley, and was clearly recognized as such by those who utilized the figurines in areas further afield as well.³⁵³

It is more difficult, however, to identify major production centers for the figurines represented as Types 3-5 at the Mut Precinct, as they are all made from Nile silt B2, ubiquitous throughout the Nile Valley.³⁵⁴ Furthermore, these figures do not exhibit such material elaboration as polychrome painting, faience or metal jewelry, linen wrappings or hair, which might signal their manufacture in a highly organized and state-supplied workshop setting. In addition, their molded shapes and red coatings could have been achieved by potters working in the most basic of pottery ateliers. What does enable us to seek out distribution patterns for these Types 3-5 figurines, however, is the presence of these types of figures, which display standardization for given time periods, both within and outside the Theban region.

As noted above, Type 3 figurines have been excavated in the largest numbers in the Theban area, both on the east and west banks, and in the Hermopolis/el-Ashmunein area. The concentration of Type 3's is strong at the Karnak complex, and similar figurines are notably attested at the mortuary temple complexes of Seti I and Ramesses II in western Thebes. A comparable situation can be seen for the Type 4 "pinched head" figurines, so far attested at the Mut Precinct, Medinet Habu, and the Ramesseum.³⁵⁵ Type 4's, however, have not yet been found outside of Thebes. This may be because the Type 4's exhibit similar lower body types to the Type 3's and can only identified as a type if their heads are preserved. It is possible, therefore, that Type 4's have been found elsewhere, but exist in lower halves only.

It is perhaps not coincidental that molds for female figurines are also attested at Thebes and Hermopolis/el-Ashmunein, although the molds are for Type 2 women-on-a-bed figurines and not for Type 3's specifically.

³⁵³ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 228-229.

³⁵⁴ Bourriau, Nicholson and Rose, "Pottery," 140.

³⁵⁵ Cairo JE 59693: Hölscher, *Post-Ramessid Remains. The Excavation of Medinet Habu V*, 58 and pl. 34C; UC 29792: Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, 60 and pl. 52 no. 430.

Nevertheless, this is evidence that figurines were shaped and fired in both locales, and not only in Thebes. Thus, labeling greater Thebes and the Hermopolitan region as centers of Type 3 figurine production seems appropriate at this juncture. It is likely that further examples of Types 3 and 4 female figures remain as yet unpublished (or unexcavated), and it is only when the corpus of these types of figurines increases that we will gain a larger picture of the production and distribution patterns for these objects.

Similarly, Type 5 (“pancake”-style) female figurines have been excavated at Thebes and Hermopolis, and were theoretically produced in both locales, being the Late Period manifestation of an already centuries-long tradition of ceramic female figurine manufacture. As with the Types 3 and 4, many more Type 5 figurine fragments undoubtedly await excavation and/or identification and publication, and a wider geographical diffusion may be revealed in the future.

To summarize, a Thebano-centric model for the production of New Kingdom and later ceramic female figurines is advocated, although we must not neglect other royally sponsored cities like Amarna/Hermopolis, Gurob, and Memphis as possible loci of production. Diffusion outwards from the Theban region seems likely for Type 1 (“Gebel Zeit” type) figurines, and multiple centers of manufacture seems probable for the polychrome painted Type 2 figurines of the New Kingdom. For the Third Intermediate and Late Period types (Types 3-5), an interesting geographical situation can so far be gleaned from the published material, wherein figurines appear to have been manufactured to a standardized type in both Thebes and Hermopolis/el-Ashmunein.

Transport of these portable objects from their production centers outwards could have been achieved overland or via the river, and undertaken by individuals or groups, for example, mining expeditions. It is the wide geographical diffusion of certain types, notably the Type 1’s, that reveal a countrywide standard for ceramic female figures, acknowledged and desired by inhabitants as far from the Nile Valley as the Second Cataract and Eastern desert. Future publications and studies of ceramic female figurines of the New Kingdom and later are likely to enlarge this admittedly preliminary study of the manufacture and distribution of these small objects, and will only increase our understanding of their meaning and function.

2.4 Material & Color Symbolism and Iconographic Remarks

“Magical practice does not begin only with the finished image; no less significant for the identification of image and object are the materials and procedures used in the preparation of figures.”³⁵⁶

This section will address the symbolic and religious significance that the ancient Egyptians attached to the materials and manufacturing procedures utilized in creating such objects as the Mut Precinct female figurines. That the Egyptians assigned deeper meaning to the materials with which they worked is well documented,³⁵⁷ and must be considered if we are to arrive at a complete understanding of the figurines under study here. This section will begin with clay and the modeling process, followed by subsidiary materials used in the production of some figurines like metal, faience, and linen, and will continue with remarks on color symbolism as manifested in the pigment preserved on many female figures. The section will conclude with several remarks on the iconography of the figures.

2.4.1 Material Symbolism

2.4.1.1 Clay

The Egyptian language has several words for earth or soil³⁵⁸ (i.e. *t3*,³⁵⁹ *šht*,³⁶⁰ *s3tw/st*,³⁶¹ and *kšh*,³⁶²) and at least four words that can be translated as ‘clay’ (*ʿmʿt*,³⁶³ *(i)ppt*,³⁶⁴ *im*³⁶⁵ and *sin(t)*).³⁶⁶ It should be noted, however,

³⁵⁶ Robert K. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 158.

³⁵⁷ The primary study is Sydney H. Aufrère, *L'univers minéral dans la pensée égyptienne*. Cairo: IFAO, 1990.

³⁵⁸ For a full discussion of the words for earthy materials, see Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 199-210.

³⁵⁹ Adolf Erman and Hermann Grapow, eds. *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*. 7 vols. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs Verlag, 1926-1963 (henceforth *WB*). V:212-216.

³⁶⁰ *WB* I: 12, I-II; Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 199; Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 681.

³⁶¹ *WB* IV: 423; Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 202; Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 681.

³⁶² *WB* V: 12; Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 681; Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 205.

³⁶³ *WB* I: 186; Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 200-201; Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 681.

³⁶⁴ Rainer Hannig, *Grosses Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch-Deutsch (2800-950 v. Chr.)*. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag P. von Zabern, 1995. 45; Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 676 and n.128; Guillemette Andreu and Sylvie Cauville, “Vocabulaire absent du *Wörterbuch* (I).” *Revue d'égyptologie* 29 (1977) 8.

³⁶⁵ *WB* I: 78.3.

³⁶⁶ *WB* IV: 37, 1.

that some ambiguity remains with these terms, and strict translations of the former group as ‘earth’ and the latter group as ‘clay’ do not always hold. For instance, *šht*, defined by the *Wörterbuch* as “Acker” or “Ackererde,” is both “the usual word for field or arable land” and also “a term for the Nile alluvium...from which bricks and the coarser kinds of pottery were commonly made.”³⁶⁷ *šht* is thus one Egyptian word for the potter’s material Nile silt, from which female figurines were also made. In addition, the term *mʿt* “means mud or clay” and “seems to coincide with both *šht* and *kʒh*, though it is perhaps less precise than either, and ‘mud’ is the most satisfactory translation,” according to J.R. Harris.³⁶⁸

A number of less certain terms that might denote clay can also be found in medical prescriptions.³⁶⁹ The difficulties associated with one of these words – *im* – will be elucidated in the following chapter. Another possible term for clay is *bsn*,³⁷⁰ which James F. Nunn and Christian Leitz take as “clay,”³⁷¹ based on its repeated presence in the phrase, “*bsn n kḏ(-nds)*,” where *kḏ* means “potter.”³⁷² Others, however, including Peter Dorman, continue to follow the *Wörterbuch* reading of *bsn* as natron or a similar crystalline substance.³⁷³ Yet another word that appears in similar constructions is *dbn*, which the *Wörterbuch* glosses as “etwas das Maurer und Töpfer gebrauchen; auch in ofizineller Verwendung. Auch in den Verbingdungen: *dbn (n) iḳdw*.”³⁷⁴ The hieroglyphic examples of this phrase provided in the *Wörterbuch* – all from medical prescriptions – appear to indicate that *dbn* is in fact a potter’s material (i.e. clay). The final example, from P. Hearst,³⁷⁵ seems the most clear, in that the word utilizes the determinative of a man seated at a potter’s wheel.

Despite the lingering uncertainty about several of the above terms, we can nevertheless glean from magico-medical and literary texts that figures of humans, animals or deities could be fashioned from the materials

³⁶⁷ Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 199; Aufrère, *L’univers minéral*, 681.

³⁶⁸ *Lexicographical Studies*, 200-201.

³⁶⁹ James F. Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine*. London: British Museum Press, 1996. 145.

³⁷⁰ *WB* I: 475, I-II.

³⁷¹ Nunn, 145; Christian Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri of the New Kingdom*. London: British Museum Press for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1999. 57.

³⁷² P. Hearst (7.11); P. Ebers 40.9, 48.17; P. Ebers 69.18-19; Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 96 n.401, 402; P. BM 10059 IV, 4-5; Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri*, 57.

³⁷³ Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 96; Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 191;

³⁷⁴ *WB* V: 438.

³⁷⁵ P. Hearst 14, 17; Adolf Erman and Hermann Grapow, eds. *Wörterbuch der Ägyptischen Sprache: Die Belegstellen*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1982. V:65.

t3,³⁷⁶ *mꜥt*,³⁷⁷ *im*,³⁷⁸ or *sin(t)*,³⁷⁹ with *sin(t)* being the sole word used to qualify images of females.³⁸⁰

Further lexicographical aspects of these words will be discussed in Chapter 3. For the purposes of this religious and symbolic analysis of the material, however, it is vital to note that in the Egyptian worldview, mankind was associated with clay.³⁸¹ This is particularly evident in the Coffin Texts, in which the deceased is said to be made of clay (*im*),³⁸² and in the mythology of the god Khnum. Attested as early as the Pyramid Texts³⁸³ and reaching full elaboration in the “Great Hymn” at Esna, the role of the ram-headed deity Khnum was as “the creator of mankind who continually creates men and women on his potter’s wheel and endows the human body with all its parts and functions.”³⁸⁴ This identification may also relate to Khnum’s earliest guise as the deity associated with the First Cataract area, the mythical starting point of the Nile flood, and thus its fertile soil.³⁸⁵

One of Khnum’s most common epithets is *ḳd rmt*, “he who fashions mankind,” providing “a direct link to the artisan’s sphere of occupation through the verb *ḳd*, which can mean both “to fashion pots (on a wheel),” and “to create,”³⁸⁶ as well as “to build.”³⁸⁷ The Egyptian potter

³⁷⁶ i.e. “The Legend of Isis and the Secret Name of Re,” Papyrus Turin 1993 and variants, wherein Isis fashions (*ḳd*) a serpent out of earth (*t3*): Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 30 and n.168; Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 76.

³⁷⁷ i.e. Papyrus Vandier: Georges Posener, *Le Papyrus Vandier*. Cairo: IFAO, 1985. 31-32, wherein the magician molds clay (*ḳd mꜥt*) to form a man of earth (*rmt n szꜥw*).

³⁷⁸ i.e. Papyrus Ebers: Georg Ebers, *Papyrus Ebers: das hermetische Buch über die Arzneimitel der alten Ägypter in hieratischer Schrift*. Leipzig: Wilhelm Engelmann, 1875. pl. 59 l.22, pl. 69 l.19, pl. 85 l.13.

³⁷⁹ i.e. O. Gardiner 363 = HO 109, 1 = H.O. Ashmolean 363: Ritner, “O. Gardiner 363: A Spell Against Night Terrors.” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 27 (1990) 25-41.

³⁸⁰ See the translations and commentary in Chapter 3.

³⁸¹ Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 137-138 and n.614.

³⁸² CT IV, 1e, 35f; Aufrère, *L’univers minéral*, 682.

³⁸³ PT 524a; Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 104.

³⁸⁴ Miriam Lichtheim, comp. *Ancient Egyptian Literature: a book of readings*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980. III: 111-115. See also Peter F. Dorman, “Creation on the Potter’s Wheel at the Eastern Horizon of Heaven.” *Gold of Praise: Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honor of Edward F. Wente*. Eds. Emily Teeter and John A. Larson. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1999. 83-99.

³⁸⁵ Richard H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*. London and New York: Thames & Hudson, 2003. 194.

³⁸⁶ Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 83.

³⁸⁷ WB V: 72,8-73,24; Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 83.

who worked to create silt and marl vessels and figurines would have held the similar title, (*i*)*kd*,³⁸⁸ and in effect, performed the same task as the god, turning lumps of clay into a human form.

The Egyptians' symbolic understanding of clay as a medium imbued with the essence of life led to its use in the manufacturing of royal and secular objects alike. Clay should thus not be regarded as a sculpting material used solely by the lower strata of society.³⁸⁹ To cite just two examples of its use at the highest levels of Egyptian culture, the 18th Dynasty ruler Amenhotep III commissioned representations of himself in unfired clay as a visual manifestation of his revivification at his sed festivals.³⁹⁰ Similarly, clay was considered suitable enough to be mixed with incense and fashioned into a figure of the underworld deity Anubis.³⁹¹ Numerous other examples of both small-scale and monumental sculpture in clay – some plastered and/or painted as well – could be cited here in the same regard,³⁹² and only further reinforce the fact that for the Egyptians, the choice of material was not (only) an economic consideration, but integral to the function and meaning of the object.³⁹³

Clay contained the possibilities of human life, making it a material perfectly suited for figurines of animals and humans, and one favored for

³⁸⁸ See Dorman's detailed discussion: *Faces in Clay*, 87-99, especially the plausible suggestion on p.97 that this occupational term, which was used for both potters and builders, may have "derived from a root that referred to the overall activity of "building/forming with damp earth."

³⁸⁹ Bianchi, "Symbols and Meanings," 24; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 224, citing William C. Hayes, *The Scepter of Egypt: a background for the study of the Egyptian antiquities in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*. New York: Harper in cooperation with the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1959. II: 16, 31: "One [ceramic] figurine belonged to the owner of an elaborately painted rishi coffin, indicating that the deceased was a man of some wealth and status."

³⁹⁰ i.e. Cairo JE 38597 from the Karnak cachette, which is sun-dried, plastered, and coated entirely in red pigment: Dorman; *Faces in Clay*, 35 and pl. 5D; Bianchi, "Symbols and Meanings," 24 and fig. 7; Arielle P. Kozloff and Betsy M. Bryan. *Egypt's Dazzling Sun: Amenhotep III and His World*. Cleveland: The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1992. 254 and fig. 46a.

³⁹¹ Stela Marseille 43: Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 682 and n.170.

³⁹² Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 24-36. See also the recent discoveries by the Waseda University expedition to Saqqara, including several large-scale, feline-headed female statues of both baked and unbaked clay: Sakuji Yoshimura, Nozomu Kawai and Hiroyuki Kashiwagi, "A Sacred Hillside at Northwest Saqqara: A Preliminary Report on the Excavations 2001-2003." *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 61 (2005) 361-402.

³⁹³ Maarten J. Raven, "Magic and Symbolic Aspects of Certain Materials in ancient Egypt." *Varia Aegyptiaca* 4 (1988) 237, 239-241.

female figurines since Predynastic times.³⁹⁴ As eloquently stated by Raven, “Like wax, this [clay] is a plastic material that can easily be modelled and quickly be destroyed, suggesting the spontaneous transition from life to death. Like wax, it is a *primaeval* substance, the very essence of the earth, yet proceeding from the Nile waters and bringing fertility and new life wherever it settles. Paradoxically, fire does not harm it but preserves it for ever.”³⁹⁵ Clay is therefore an apt material for images intended to endure, like royal, temple, and funerary statuary, as well as images to be destroyed, like execration figures. This brief review of the religious and symbolic meaning of clay helps to explain why Nile silt and marl clays – independent of their relative availability – were chosen as the prime materials for the types of female figurines under study here.

As noted above, Type 1 figurines like the example found by Johns Hopkins at the Mut Precinct could be embellished with metal, faience, and shell jewelry. Each of these materials bore symbolic overtones for the Egyptians, and these will be briefly detailed here. These symbolic notions cannot be overlooked, as they form part and parcel of the complete female figure.

2.4.1.2 Silver

A number of the Type 1 female figurines excavated at Gebel Zeit have been found with metal hoop earrings inserted into their perforated earlobes, although the exact metal is not always specified by the excavators.³⁹⁶ William C. Hayes, however, published a linen-wrapped example of a Type 1 female figure from a 17th Dynasty Theban tomb that is similar to many of the Gebel Zeit figures, and noted that the figure wears silver earrings.³⁹⁷ Geraldine Pinch has also suggested that another figurine of this type from Faras³⁹⁸ wears a crescent moon amulet molded in clay, a type of amulet often manufactured in silver.³⁹⁹ Pinch further suggests that the simple clay collar modeled around the necks of many of these figurines, like the one seen on the Mut Precinct example, is a reduced form of this crescent moon

³⁹⁴ Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 24-26.

³⁹⁵ Raven, “Magic and Symbolic Aspects of Certain Materials,” 240.

³⁹⁶ i.e. Castel et al. “Gebel Zeit: Pharaonische Bergwerke,” 20 fig. 13.

³⁹⁷ Hayes, *The Scepter of Egypt*, II: 17, fig. 6.

³⁹⁸ British Museum EA 51270: Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 201, pl.48A

³⁹⁹ Lacovara and Markowitz, “Silver,” 287; Carol Andrews, *Amulets of Ancient Egypt*. London: British Museum Press for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1994. 90, 105; Rosalind and Jac. J. Janssen, *Growing up in ancient Egypt*. London: Rubicon Press, 1990. 19 and figs. 7-8.

amulet.⁴⁰⁰ While this last suggestion remains speculative, the presence of silver earrings on a least one figure, and a clay imitation of a silver amulet on another, brings the symbolic associations with silver into our discussion of these figurines.

For the ancient Egyptians, silver (Egyptian *ḥd*,⁴⁰¹ *ʕrk wr*⁴⁰²) was an imported metal⁴⁰³ strongly associated with the moon, owing to both its purity and its color, and is thus frequently contrasted with gold, which bore solar associations.⁴⁰⁴ For example, the bones of the gods were thought to be of silver, their flesh gold, which likely accounts for the large number of extant gilt silver statues and jewelry from ancient Egypt.⁴⁰⁵ Silver is equated with the bones of divine and semi-divine beings in mythological texts like the Destruction of Mankind, the Book of the Celestial Cow, and even Ramses II's marriage stela at Abu Simbel. In the Lamentations of Isis and Nephthys (P. Bremner-Rhind), silver evokes the eternal youth of Osiris.⁴⁰⁶

Silver was especially linked with lunar deities, including Thoth, Anubis, Isis, and the nocturnal aspect of Hathor, one of whose many epithets was *ʕrk wr n nṯrwt* "the Silver of the Goddesses."⁴⁰⁷ The goddess Mut was also associated with silver and the moon, as can be read in the ritual texts inscribed on the Ptolemaic gateway of her Karnak temple. Aufrère regards one particular passage, "the black ones carry torches of silver," which describes the setting for the ritual filling of the Wedjat-eye, as a metaphor for the illumination of the night by the lunar glow, and concludes that "Le contexte...montre que Mout est ici assimilée à la lune."⁴⁰⁸

Due to its rarity, silver maintained a privileged status throughout the dynastic period in Egypt, and was reserved largely for luxury items like

⁴⁰⁰ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 201.

⁴⁰¹ *WB* III: 209-210.

⁴⁰² *WB* I: 213, used in the Greek period.

⁴⁰³ Lacovara and Markowitz, "Silver," 286-287; Jack Ogden, "Metals." *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*. Eds. Paul T. Nicholson and Ian Shaw. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge UP, 2000. 170.

⁴⁰⁴ Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 411.

⁴⁰⁵ Lacovara and Markowitz, "Silver," 287.

⁴⁰⁶ Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 412-413.

⁴⁰⁷ Lacovara and Markowitz, "Silver," 287; Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 411, 417-418.

⁴⁰⁸ Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 412 and n.51; 418.

royal tomb goods and cult statues.⁴⁰⁹ The fact that silver was imported in its raw state and subsequently worked by Egyptian smiths has already been cited above as evidence in favor of a state-sponsored workshop as the locus of manufacture for the Type 1 figurines. The symbolic aspects of silver, however, add an element of the divine into these female figurines. Although she does not mention silver as a factor in her discussion, Geraldine Pinch has already highlighted the strong Hathoric overtones of these figures, and the silver and imitation-silver jewelry present on some fired clay female figurines could certainly evoke that goddess. As we have just seen, the silver might also evoke Mut, and likely bore different divine associations according to the context in which it was used. Silver further recalls the vitality and youth of a number of deities, including Osiris, making a fitting material for those seeking health in this life and regeneration in the next. The textual evidence for magico-medical use of female figures of clay, to be detailed in the following chapter, suggests that figurines could take on the role of various goddesses, and thus the materials present on the objects should not be overlooked as small but still powerful evocations of the divine.

2.4.1.3 Copper

Geraldine Pinch has observed that one of the female figures from Gebel Zeit on display at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo wears earrings and bracelets made of copper.⁴¹⁰ Mined in the Sinai from at least the Early Dynastic period and also imported into Egypt during the New Kingdom,⁴¹¹ copper (Egyptian *ḥmti*⁴¹²) had symbolic meaning for the ancient Egyptians as well, most notably as a symbol of stability. Numerous epithets of the king, such as *ḏw n ḥmti* (“mountain of copper”) and *inb m ḥmti* (“wall of copper”), attest to copper as a metaphor for solidity and constancy.⁴¹³ The presence of copper on a female figurine – itself made of durable and

⁴⁰⁹ Lacovara and Markowitz, “Silver,” 286-287; Edna R. Russmann, “Figure of Amun.” *Eternal Egypt: Masterworks of Ancient Art from the British Museum*. Ed. Edna R. Russmann. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001. 172.

⁴¹⁰ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 203.

⁴¹¹ Peter Lacovara, “Copper.” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Donald B. Redford. New York: Oxford UP, 2001. I: 295; Andrews, *Amulets*, 106.

⁴¹² Listed in *WB I*: 436-437 under --- (reading uncertain): “Die Lesung *ḥmt* ist für die älteren Zeiten nicht sicher zu begründen.” However, the lexicographical work of John R. Harris (*Lexicographical Studies*, 60-62) and Dimitri Meeks (*Année Lexicographique*, 77.1203) has resulted in the now favored reading of *ḥmti* for copper: Aufrère, *L’univers minéral*, 449.

⁴¹³ Aufrère, *L’univers minéral*, 449-450.

inalterable fired clay – reinforces this aspect of the object, and is a fitting addition to a figure intended to provide protection and health for its owner.

2.4.1.4 Faience

The symbolic properties of Egyptian faience are well known and have been much studied.⁴¹⁴ Some salient observations about this material may, however, be useful to cite here, as a number of the Type 1 female figurines similar to the one found at the Mut Precinct retain faience bead jewelry in their hair and around their necks and bodies.

Faience (Egyptian *thnt*⁴¹⁵), whose Egyptian name itself connotes luminosity and scintillation,⁴¹⁶ was manufactured as early as the Early Dynastic Period, with the technique of molding introduced at the start of the New Kingdom.⁴¹⁷ Like clay, faience was not simply a more economical alternative to precious stones or metals; it was employed on its own for objects of the highest level of royal craftsmanship, and could be both embellished with secondary materials, and used as a secondary material itself.⁴¹⁸ As Diana Craig Patch has noted, faience appears to be more common in royal tombs than in those of lower status citizens, dispelling the notion that it was a material that poorer persons were forced to use for lack of more precious materials.⁴¹⁹ The faience scarabs and beads attached to female figurines like the Gebel Zeit examples may therefore indicate that their producers and consumers were of relatively high status.

The blue-green color of faience, derived from its copper ingredient, evokes freshness, vitality, and health, making faience an appropriate medium for amulets and other objects associated with well-being, including female figures.⁴²⁰ Faience also appears as an ingredient in Egyptian

⁴¹⁴ See, for example, Friedman, ed., *Gifts of the Nile: Ancient Egyptian Faience*, and the essays therein; Fabienne Lavenex Vergès, *Bleus Égyptiens*. Leuven: Peeters, 1992, especially Chapter I; Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 521-537.

⁴¹⁵ *WB V*: 390.

⁴¹⁶ Bianchi, "Symbols and Meanings," 24.

⁴¹⁷ See above, section 2.2.

⁴¹⁸ Bianchi, "Symbols and Meanings," 25.

⁴¹⁹ Diana Craig Patch, "By Necessity or Design." *Gifts of the Nile: Ancient Egyptian Faience*. 43.

⁴²⁰ Recall that female figurines of the Middle Kingdom were frequently made of faience: Bianchi, "Symbols and Meanings," 25-26; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 198-199, 226-227; Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 504.

medical prescriptions,⁴²¹ and could be pulverized, mixed with fat, and applied to the sufferer as a salve,⁴²² or cooked into ingestible pills.⁴²³

The magically healing properties of faience may have derived not only from its color, but also from its manufacturing process: the paste entered the kiln as a dull, almost colorless mixture, and emerged a brilliant blue-green, a transformation that likely gave the material added cachet.⁴²⁴ Bearing this in mind, we can easily see why faience was an appropriate primary or secondary material for objects utilized in religious and magico-medical situations, such as the female figurines under discussion here.

2.4.1.5 Shell

Seashells (Egyptian *ḥ3*,⁴²⁵ *wḏ'it*⁴²⁶) were objects of curiosity in ancient Egypt, particularly in the Nile Valley, to which they were imported from the Red Sea coast.⁴²⁷ Red Sea shells were utilized as tomb goods and components of royal jewelry from the Predynastic period onwards,⁴²⁸ and, nearer to their points of origin, were deposited as religious offerings at

⁴²¹ Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 136 and n.24-26, 137 and n.1-2; Hildegard von Deines and Hermann Grapow, eds. *Wörterbuch der Ägyptischen Drogennamen. Grundriss der Medizin der Alten Ägypter VI*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1959. 568. The authors also include the reading "Glasfluss (?)" for *ḥnt*, but note that B. Ebbell (*The Papyrus Ebers, The Greatest Egyptian Medical Document*. Copenhagen: Levin and Munksgaard, 1937) takes the word as "faience." In his later publication (*Handbuch der Altägyptischen Medizin*. Leiden: Brill, 1999. II: 598), Westendorf translates *ḥnt* as "Fayence" (quotation marks his).

⁴²² Papyrus Edwin Smith, Case 41 (14,5): James Hentry Breasted, *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930. 378-379, 382; Hildegard von Dienes, Hermann Grapow and Wolfhart Westendorf. *Übersetzung der Medizinischen Texte. Grundriss der Medizin der Alten Ägypter IV, 1*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1958. 195.

⁴²³ Papyrus Ebers 273 (49,21-50,2): Wolfhart Westendorf, *Handbuch der Altägyptischen Medizin*. Leiden: Brill, 1999. II: 598; von Dienes, Grapow and Westendorf, *Übersetzung der Medizinischen Texte*, 294.

⁴²⁴ Friedman, "Faience: The Brilliance of Eternity," 15.

⁴²⁵ *WB III*: 218; Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 592.

⁴²⁶ *WB I*: 407; von Dienes and Grapow, eds. *Wörterbuch der Ägyptischen Drogennamen. Grundriss der Medizin der Alten Ägypter VI*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1959. 147-148; clarified by Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 592-593 and n.16.

⁴²⁷ Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 592-593

⁴²⁸ Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 593.

mining sites like Gebel Zeit and Timna.⁴²⁹ Like faience, shells (*wḏ'it*) were also used in medical prescriptions.⁴³⁰

The small, possibly nerite, shells affixed to the linen hair of at least one Type 1 female figurine found at Gebel Zeit were in all likelihood local products.⁴³¹ They were probably replacement beads for the faience or clay pellets that had originally adorned the figure's hair when the figurine was acquired in the Theban area because, as the excavators have noted, the hair and body adornments on these figurines were fragile and often replaced with related materials.⁴³² The shells used as hair beads would have thus added some local flavor to these figures imported from the Nile Valley, and probably linked them with one of the patron deities of the miners, Hathor, Lady of Galena (*nbt msdmt*),⁴³³ a goddess who also bore the epithet, "She of the Beautiful Hair."⁴³⁴

2.4.1.6 Linen

As noted above, one female figurine from Gebel Zeit that is similar to the Mut Precinct Type 1 figurine has been published together with the elaborate fringed and beaded linen wrapping in which it was enveloped. A 17th Dynasty female figurine of the same type at the Metropolitan Museum, illustrated by Hayes in *The Scepter of Egypt*, is also wrapped in linen.⁴³⁵ Like the other materials discussed in this chapter, linen can be read for its social and symbolic implications.

⁴²⁹ Sydney H. Aufrère, "L'Étrange et La Curiosité." *Encyclopédie religieuse de l'univers végétal croyances phytoreligieuses de l'Égypte ancienne* Ed. Sydney H. Aufrère. Montpellier: Université Paul Valéry-Montpellier III, 1999-2002. I: 73-74; Castel et al. "Découverte de mines pharaoniques au bord de la Mer Rouge," 48 fig. 3 and 52.

⁴³⁰ *WB I*: 407; von Dienes and Grapow, eds. *Wörterbuch der Ägyptischen Drogenamen. Grundriss der Medizin der Alten Ägypter VI*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1959. 147-148.

⁴³¹ The excavators report finding both nerite and cowrie shells in association with female figurines at the site: Castel et al. "Découverte de mines pharaoniques au bord de la Mer Rouge," 52, and the one illustrated figurine from the site with shells and faience beads threaded in its hair appears to show small nerite shells: Leclant and Clerc, "Fouilles et travaux en Égypte et au Soudan, 1984-1985." *Orientalia* 55 (1986) Tab. XLVIII fig. 61; Castel et al. "Gebel Zeit: Pharaonische Bergwerke," 19.

⁴³² Castel et al. "Gebel Zeit: Pharaonische Bergwerke," 19.

⁴³³ Aufrère, "L'Étrange et La Curiosité," 74; Castel and Soukiasian, "Les Mines de Galene du Gebel Zeit," 163.

⁴³⁴ Georges Posener, "La légende de la tresse d'Hathor." *Egyptological Studies in Honor of Richard A. Parker: presented on the occasion of his 78th birthday, December 10, 1983*. Ed. Leonard H. Lesko. Hanover, New Hampshire and London: University Press of New England for Brown University Press, 1986. 111-117.

⁴³⁵ Hayes, *The Scepter of Egypt*, II: 17, fig. 6.

Most often spun from flax and woven on a loom, Egyptian textiles were manufactured in a variety of qualities. The most luxurious textiles were those that were finely woven, used large areas of color, and bore applied decoration. In short, the more elaborate the textile's decoration, the higher the status of its owner.⁴³⁶

Using the criteria noted above, the cloth in which the Gebel Zeit female figurine was wrapped looks to have been quite high-status.⁴³⁷ It is a purpose-made,⁴³⁸ rectangular piece of cloth incorporating colored threads and decorated with a fringed and beaded edge. The excavators report that a number of female figurines from the site were wrapped in such cloths, describing them as "ein quadratisches oder rechteckiges Leinentuch, das mit farbigen Wollfäden oder Perlenreihen geschmückt ist und an deren Fransen Perlen, Amulette und Skarabäen befestigt sind."⁴³⁹ As noted above, Geraldine Pinch has suggested a Theban workshop as the site of these textiles' manufacture, and this appears likely. The elaboration of the linen wrappings, together with the care and detail of the handmade female figures, suggest a highly qualified artisan or group of artisans as the manufacturers of these objects, and those who wove the elaborate textiles were likely women.⁴⁴⁰ The galena miners were undoubtedly the consumers who brought the figurine to the site.

As well as being a marker of social status, linen also bore symbolic properties. Statues of deities were clothed in high-quality linen during temple rituals,⁴⁴¹ and this linen was regarded as divine itself, suitably pure to be placed on the body of a god. Linen also took on a magical and protective role, especially in mummification,⁴⁴² as the material holding together the deceased's body, keeping it whole for the next life. The protective quality of

⁴³⁶ Gillian M. Vogelsang-Eastwood, "Weaving, Looms, and Textiles." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Donald B. Redford. New York: Oxford UP, 2001. III: 488-490.

⁴³⁷ Castel et al. "Gebel Zeit: Pharaonische Bergwerke," 19-20 and fig. 13; Paule Posener-Krieger, "Les travaux de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale en 1984-1985." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 85 (1985) pl. LXV.

⁴³⁸ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 116.

⁴³⁹ Castel et al. "Gebel Zeit: Pharaonische Bergwerke," 19.

⁴⁴⁰ "It is clear from both texts and depictions that the vast majority of those involved in the production of cloth were women." Vogelsang-Eastwood, "Weaving, Looms, and Textiles." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. III: 491-492.

⁴⁴¹ Vogelsang-Eastwood, "Weaving, Looms, and Textiles." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. III: 492.

⁴⁴² Vogelsang-Eastwood, "Weaving, Looms, and Textiles." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. III: 492; Rosalind Hall, *Egyptian Textiles*. Princes Risborough, UK: Shire, 1986. 18.

linen was embodied by the Egyptian goddess of weaving, Tait, who appears as a maternal figure in Pyramid Text spell 741b⁴⁴³ and who, in spell 738a, guards the king's head, gathers together his bones, and grants him favor with other gods. In the Graeco-Roman period, Tait was identified with Neith, Osiris, Isis, and Nephthys.⁴⁴⁴

The archaeological context of most ceramic female figurines shows that it was not typical for such objects to be wrapped in linen before deposition. Instead, most female figurines appear to have been broken and then discarded without special wrappings or placement. The few female figures found wrapped in linen, however, look to have been afforded more care because their final destination was a tomb or a shrine. The linen found wrapped around these Type 1 female figurines may thus have been regarded as both divine and magical as well. As noted above and as will be explored further in Chapter 3, textual evidence shows that female figures of clay could be identified with several goddesses, and the cloth wrapped around some extant female figures could be taken as a divine attribute. This conclusion was also tentatively reached by Pinch.⁴⁴⁵

The female figurines found enclosed in linen should not, however, be envisioned as mummies, nor should they be read as 'clothed' in order to hide their nudity.⁴⁴⁶ The linen looks instead to have been a secondary

⁴⁴³ Maria-Theresia Derchain-Urtel, "Tait." *LÄ VI*: 185.

⁴⁴⁴ *LÄ VI*: 185; Richard H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*, 168.

⁴⁴⁵ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 216.

⁴⁴⁶ Contra other suggestions by Pinch (*Votive Offerings*, 212, 224), who projects modern notions of prudery onto these ancient objects in saying that, "In temple contexts there appears to have been greater reticence about female sexuality than about male sexuality. This may be why many of the fertility figurines at Gebel Zeit were found wrapped in linen. These pieces of linen could be interpreted as dresses, as veils, or as protective wrappings." Female sexuality in Egyptian temples is well attested, although encoded in ancient terms, not modern ones (see, for example, Philippe Derchain, "La perruque et le cristal." *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur* 2 (1975) 55-74; Lise Manniche, *Sexual Life in Ancient Egypt*. London and New York: Kegan Paul, 1987; Gay Robins, "Ancient Egyptian Sexuality." *Discussions in Egyptology* 11 (1988) 61-72; "Dress, Undress," 27-40) and Pinch herself has stressed nudity as one of the defining characteristics of female figurines (*Votive Offerings*, 225). Only one ceramic female figure appears to have been painted in white to indicate a dress (British Museum EA 55595, discussed above and in Pinch, "Childbirth," 408 and n.19) and it is an exception. That the linen wrappings are protective is the most likely of Pinch's suggested functions, and, as she notes, probably has more to do with "the prestige of the context in which they were to be placed" (Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 224) than with the primary use of the figure. Note, however, that in other regions of the ancient Near East, figurines were wrapped in linen as clothing. For example, Mesopotamian clay figurines acting as magical representations of ghosts were clothed, adorned, fed, and eventually buried in order to exorcise the offending spirit; see JoAnn Scurlock, *Magico-Medical Means of Treating Ghost-Induced Illnesses in Ancient Mesopotamia*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006. 49-50.

material addition to figurines that were ritually deposited rather than discarded. In fact, the linen-wrapped Gebel Zeit figure looks broken across its torso in one published photograph.⁴⁴⁷ The figure was thus in at least two pieces prior to being enveloped and deposited at the shrine, suggesting that its breakage was a result of its earlier use, and its deposition in a piece of linen, a secondary action, perhaps one intended to preserve the figure for future (re)use.

With so few extant examples of female figurines wrapped in linen available to us, however, it is difficult to fully assess the symbolic meaning of the textiles. However, reading the linen as an element of the divine, and/or a secondary material added to figurines that were deposited rather than discarded following their initial use, seem the most likely suppositions based on the evidence currently available.

2.4.2 *Color Symbolism*

Red washes and applied pigments in the hues of red, blue, black, and white are present on several of the ceramic female figurines excavated by Johns Hopkins from the Mut Precinct (see catalogue, **Appendix A**). The colors yellow and green are not represented on the Mut Precinct figures, although they can be seen on other, comparative female figures, particularly Type 2's.⁴⁴⁸ The symbolism of the colors found on the Mut female figurines will be discussed in this section, beginning with the most prevalent hue, red.

2.4.2.1 Red

As already discussed above in section 2.1, the majority of the Johns Hopkins-excavated female figures were fashioned from Nile silt clay, which has the tendency to fire to a reddish-brown color. In addition, a large number of the Hopkins figurines retain a red ochre wash on either their front or back, and sometimes both. The latter is particularly evident on the Type 3-6 figurines, and comparative examples attest to the frequency of such a red wash on female figures of New Kingdom and later date. Red pigment is also specifically applied to the flesh areas of the woman and baby on some Type 2 figurines. As conscious choices made during the manufacture of the figurines, these red-hued materials will be studied for their symbolic meaning, and for what they might reveal about the ritual functions of these objects.

⁴⁴⁷ Castel et al. "Gebel Zeit: Pharaonische Bergwerke," 20 Abb.13.

⁴⁴⁸ Pinch, "Childbirth and Female Figurines," 405-414; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 207-209; Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 29-30, 41.

Red washes can be seen on Egyptian ceramic female figurines as early as the Predynastic period,⁴⁴⁹ and while Egyptologists are increasingly noting the presence of a red ochre wash on recently-excavated figurines,⁴⁵⁰ the red pigment on female figurines has not yet been subjected to deeper analysis, save for brief remarks about the color being a contrast to the more usual, yellow hue of women's skin in the official canon of Egyptian art.⁴⁵¹ To remedy this, this section will explore the possible reason(s) behind the red coloring applied to so many ceramic female figurines from the Mut Precinct and elsewhere by looking at a number of well-attested rites involving red objects, bearing in mind that "colours could be dissociated from the physical appearance and connected more with the object's nature (i.e. for magical purposes)."⁴⁵² This section will assert that, when viewed in light of these rites, and taking into consideration the female figurines' archaeological context and condition when excavated, the red pigment is a

⁴⁴⁹ A.J. Spencer, *Early Egypt: The Rise of Civilization in the Nile Valley*, 24 fig. 10. Although outside the scope of the present work, it is worth noting that female figurines from a variety of early cultures, including the Venus of Willendorf, were frequently coated with red ochre. This has most often led scholars to assign a ritual function to the objects. See, for example, Betty Blandino, *The Figure in Fired Clay*. London: A&C Black, 2001. 10, 15; Shin'ichi Nishiyama and Satoru Yoshizawa, "Who Worshipped the Clay Goddess?: the late first millennium BC terracotta figurines from Tell Matsuma, Northwest Syria." *Bulletin of the Orient Museum (Tokyo)* 17 (1997) 73-98; Mary M. Voight, *Hajji Firuz Tepe, Iran: The Neolithic Settlement*. Philadelphia: The University Museum, 1983. 175-200.

⁴⁵⁰ i.e. Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 28-42; Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*. 62.

⁴⁵¹ Florence D. Friedman, "Aspects of Domestic Life and Religion." *Pharaoh's Workers*. Ed. Leonard H. Lesko. New York: Cornell UP, 1994. 100, 114; Nicola Harrington, "From the Cradle to the Grave: Anthropoid busts and ancestor cults at Deir el-Medina." *Current research in Egyptology 2003. Proceedings of the fourth annual symposium which took place at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London 18 - 19 January 2003*. Eds. Kathryn Piquette and Serena Love. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2005. 75-76, 78. Harrington lists nursing mothers on ostraca and feminoform vessels, as well as anthropoid busts, as other categories of female figure that were normally painted red. She also cites numerous cases in which goddesses and women appear with red or reddish-brown skin. Stevens (*Private Religion at Amarna*, 282) queries whether red was chosen "over a more realistic colour scheme" – presumably yellow or pink – "to increase the magical effectiveness" of female figurines, but does not pursue the point. For red as the usual color of men and yellow as the usual hue of women in Egyptian art, see Melinda Hartwig, "Painting." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. III: 1; Gay Robins, *The Art of Ancient Egypt*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1997. 55. For remarks on the many exceptions to the female/yellow, male/red rule in two-dimensional representations and statuary, and the little attention paid to the female body painted red, see Karol Myśliwiec, "The Red and Yellow: An Aspect of the Egyptian 'Aspective'." *Timelines: Studies in honour of Manfred Bietak*. Eds. Ernst Czerny, Irmgard Bein, Hermann Hunger, Dagmar Melman, and Angela Schwab. Leuven: Peeters, 2006. I: 225-236.

⁴⁵² Myśliwiec, "The Red and Yellow: An Aspect of the Egyptian 'Aspective'," 232.

clear sign that these figures were magico-medical in function. It is likely that the red coloring of the figurines refers not only to bodily health by evoking the color of blood, but also to the objects' ability to embody the evil or 'redness' of a disease in a ritual of transference. Textual evidence in the form of magico-medical spells calling for clay female figures, to be elucidated in Chapter 3, reinforces this interpretation of the color. In addition, it will be emphasized that the deliberate breaking of female figurines was a necessary act at the conclusion of the rites in which they were used in order to ensure that the offending evil, represented in part by the red pigment, did not escape the figure to re-infect the participants. It will be reiterated that the potent and often negative associations that the Egyptians made with the color red make it a fitting hue for – and indeed, a signifier of – vehicles of magic.

The symbolism of the color red (*dšr*, *tms(t)*) in Egyptian magic has already received much attention.⁴⁵³ The color's ambiguous status as one evocative of blood, sun, and fire – all of which could be either life-giving or destructive – has been oft-stressed.⁴⁵⁴ Of particular import for this investigation is that red is the color of the vessels smashed in the well-attested rite of "Breaking the Red Vessels;"⁴⁵⁵ the color of both execration figures and the ink used for the text written upon them;⁴⁵⁶ and the name of

⁴⁵³ Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 147-148 and 169-170, with extensive textual bibliography in notes 662-668 and 787. Add to this some more general discussions on the symbolism of the color red: Hermann Kees, "Farbensymbolik in ägyptischen religiösen Texten." *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*. Göttingen, 1943. 413-479; Gustave Lefebvre, "Rouges et Nuances Voisines." *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 35 (1949) 72-76; Emma Brunner-Traut, "Farbsymbolik." *LÄ* II: 122-126; Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 556-560; Richard H. Wilkinson, *Symbol and Magic in Egyptian Art*. London and New York: Thames & Hudson, 1994. 104-125; Gay Robins, "Color Symbolism." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. I: 291-294; Geraldine Pinch, "Red Things: the symbolism of colour in magic." *Colour and Painting in Ancient Egypt*. Ed. W. Vivian Davies. London: BM Press (2001). 182-185.

⁴⁵⁴ Raven, "Magic and Symbolic Aspects of Certain Materials," 237-238; Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 147-8, with references; Robins, "Color Symbolism," 292; Wilkinson, *Symbol and Magic*, 106-107; Pinch, "Red things," 182-185; Lynn Meskell, "An Archaeology of Social Relations in an Egyptian Village." *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 5 (3), 1998. 227-229; Meskell, *Private Life in New Kingdom Egypt*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2002. 119; Myśliwiec, "The Red and Yellow: An Aspect of the Egyptian 'Aspective'," 234.

⁴⁵⁵ Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 144-183; Jacobus Van Dijk, "Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe." *LÄ* IV: 1389-1396, both with references.

⁴⁵⁶ Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 147, 170 and n.663-664, 787; Patricia Bochi, "Death by Drama: The Ritual of *Damnatio Memoriae* in Ancient Egypt." *Göttinger Miszellen* 171 (1999) 79; Joachim F. Quack, "Some Old Kingdom Execration Figures from the Teti Cemetery." *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 13 (2002) n.8.

bodily threats listed in magico-medical texts. For example, in Papyrus Ebers, a bodily threat is called *dšrt*, “red things,”⁴⁵⁷ and the sufferer calls on Isis for protection from the disease.⁴⁵⁸ In that papyrus, the word is determined with the hieratic stroke for the “dying man” glyph⁴⁵⁹ in its first instance, and with a “bad bird”⁴⁶⁰ in its second instance, indicating its malevolent nature.⁴⁶¹ Similarly, in Papyrus Edwin Smith, there is a prescription to combat the physical condition called *tmsw*, which is glossed as “red things” (*iht dšr*).⁴⁶² In the New Kingdom Dream Book (Papyrus Chester Beatty III), the dreamer asks for relief from an aspect of nightmares called *tmsw*.⁴⁶³ Finally, in one spell of the *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, a woman who has recently given birth is called a Hmt dSrt, “a red woman.”⁴⁶⁴ *dšr*, in addition to its literal meaning, almost certainly has a pejorative sense in this spell, as a recent editor of the text, Naoko Yamazaki, has observed. Yamazaki suggests that here, “red” characterizes the “die schwierige Lage der Frau...die Mehrlinge gebiert, denn eine solche Geburt ist sicherlich für die Mutter und die Kinder risikoreicher als die Geburt eines einzelnen Kindes.”⁴⁶⁵ This is yet a further instance of *dšrt*,

⁴⁵⁷ *WB V*: 488,lb.

⁴⁵⁸ Eb. 2 (1,14-15, 1,20): Hermann Grapow, *Die Medizinischen Texte in Hieroglyphischer Umschreibung Autographiert. Grundriss der Medizin der Alten Ägypter V*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1958. 533; Pinch, “Red things,” 182; Brunner-Traut, “Farbsymbolik,” 124; Lefebvre, “Rouges et Nuances Voisines.” *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 35 (1949) 74; J. Gwyn Griffiths, “The Symbolism of Red in Egyptian Religion.” *Ex Orbe Religionum. Studies in the History of Religions* 21-22. Leiden: Brill, 1972. 84. Griffiths takes *dšrt* in the papyrus to mean “bloody” things, a fitting nuance for a medical text and one in keeping with the related word *dšrw*, “blood.” (*WB V*: 491).

⁴⁵⁹ Gardiner Sign-list A14: Alan H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, Third Edition, Revised. Oxford: Griffith Institute/Ashmolean Museum, 1994. 443.

⁴⁶⁰ Gardiner Sign-list G37: Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, 471.

⁴⁶¹ Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 147 n.662.

⁴⁶² Sm Fall 39 (13, 3-12): Hermann Grapow, *Die Medizinischen Texte in Hieroglyphischer Umschreibung Autographiert. Grundriss der Medizin der alten Ägypter V*, 337; Wolfhart Westendorf, *Handbuch der Altägyptischen Medizin*. Leiden: Brill, 1999. II: 735; Kasia Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eyes: Dreams and Nightmares in Ancient Egypt*. Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2003. 165 n.39.

⁴⁶³ Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eyes*, 163-165, with references.

⁴⁶⁴ Spell V (vs. VI 1-7): Naoko Yamazaki, ed. *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind: Papyrus Berlin 3027*. Berlin: Achet Verlag, 2003. 52-53 and Tafel 16.

⁴⁶⁵ Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche*, 53.

“red,” conveying a sense of pain or illness that needs to be remedied through magical words and actions.

The word *tms(t)* has the basic meaning “red” or “red-colored material.”⁴⁶⁶ It is usually determined with the scribal kit, thus suggesting red pigment or ink.⁴⁶⁷ However, like *dšrt*, it takes on the negative connotation of “red/bad things” when written as the plural *tmsw*, and especially when it is determined with the “bad bird” determinative, as in the Book of the Dead.⁴⁶⁸

Robert Ritner has suggested that *tmsw*, which also appears in the Amduat, “may be the Egyptian term for ‘ritual execration,’” as it “readily evokes the ancient ritual of the red vases.”⁴⁶⁹ Kasia Szpakowska translates *Tmsw* as “ailments,” further defining it as “some kind of affliction or hurt that could be perpetrated on an individual.”⁴⁷⁰ Like Ritner’s suggestion, Szpakowska’s definition also gives the *tmsw* an active quality, the ability to injure someone. Szpakowska further notes that based on the accompanying verb *whs* “to eliminate,” the *tmsw* of the Dream Book was something “that also could be driven out or removed.”⁴⁷¹ Whatever its exact translation, which is certain to vary slightly according to context, it is clear that *tmsw* derives from the root meaning “red” and bears with it negative, not positive, connotations.

From this brief lexicographical review, we can see that the Egyptian terms for “red” are frequently used in magical rites as descriptive words for an object or evil force that must be destroyed or repelled, and, in the case of *Tmsw*, perhaps even as expression for the act of execration itself. Given the abundance of scenarios in which red is a signifier of a dangerous force, the presence of red on so many New Kingdom and later ceramic female figurines may be taken as evidence that these objects, too, were embodiments of dangerous forces, and ones that needed to be execrated. Their consistent breakage further supports the hypothesis that the red-hued figurines were ritually destroyed before their deposition.

The first rite that we will review for clues to the ritual function of ceramic female figurines like the Mut Precinct examples is the rite of *sd*

⁴⁶⁶ *WB V*: 369

⁴⁶⁷ *WB V*: 369; Lefebvre, “Rouges et Nuances Voisines,” 74-75; Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 170 n.787.

⁴⁶⁸ *WB V*: 370; Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eyes*, 165.

⁴⁶⁹ Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 170 n.787. More on the ritual of Breaking the Red Vessels will be said immediately below.

⁴⁷⁰ Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eyes*, 165.

⁴⁷¹ Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eyes*, 170, with references.

dšrwt or “Breaking the *dšrt* (red) vessels.” The rite is first attested in the 6th Dynasty, and continues into the 18th Dynasty.⁴⁷² As Jacobus Van Dijk notes in his entry for the *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, however, “the archaeological evidence [for the rite] on one side and the textual and iconographical evidence on the other side, although doubtless related, are of different nature and seem to refer to a different ritual setting in each case.”⁴⁷³ A brief recapitulation of the evidence will highlight this disjunction.

The first textual reference to a rite called “Breaking the Red Vessels” is spell 244 of the Pyramid Texts.⁴⁷⁴ There, the rite is a protective measure for the deceased king. From the Merenre version of the spell, we glean that one of the mechanisms used to break the vessels was a mortar and pestle, because in this instance, the determinative for the verb *sq*, “to break,” is the upper body of a man grasping a pestle in his hands and bringing it down upon a mortar.⁴⁷⁵ This same method may have been used to cleanly and evenly break ceramic female figures like those excavated from the Mut Precinct. The ritual also appears in the offering texts and images of Old and Middle Kingdom tombs,⁴⁷⁶ in Coffin Text spell 926,⁴⁷⁷ as well as in a unique scene in the temple of Luxor in which Amenhotep III is shown dashing two *dšrt* vessels against one another in order to break them before the god Amun.⁴⁷⁸ Iconographic evidence for the rite can also be found in New Kingdom tombs, mostly in the Memphite necropolis, in which priests are depicted smashing jars on the ground before offering booths.⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷² Jacobus Van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ IV*: 1389, 1391-6; Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 144-153.

⁴⁷³ “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ IV*: 1389.

⁴⁷⁴ Van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ IV*:1391; Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 144-145.

⁴⁷⁵ Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 144. The determinative for *sq* in the Unas version is a broken potsherd: *ibid.* 144-5, n. 644; Ludwig Borchardt, “Bilder des ‘Zerbrechens der Krüge.’” *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 64 (1929) 12-16.

⁴⁷⁶ Van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ IV*: 1391;

⁴⁷⁷ Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 145.

⁴⁷⁸ Van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ IV*: 1391; Moret, “Le rite de Briser les Vases Rouges au temple de Louxor.” *Revue d'égyptologie* 3 (1938) 167.

⁴⁷⁹ Van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ IV*: 1389-1392; Borchardt, “Bilder des ‘Zerbrechens der Krüge.’” *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 64 (1929) 12-16.

The archaeological evidence for the rite, as presented by Van Dijk, consists of “a number of groups of figurines depicting enemies and fragments of deliberately broken pottery vessels inscribed with the so-called Execration Texts.”⁴⁸⁰ All of these elements, including the ink used for the texts, could be colored red. These deliberately fragmented objects are generally referred to by Egyptologists as “Execration” materials, and have been found in contexts ranging from cemeteries to the environs of Nubian forts,⁴⁸¹ although none of the artifacts are specifically inscribed with the phrase “breaking the red vessels.”

After reviewing the above evidence, Van Dijk concludes that “[i]t seems likely that the destruction of figurines or pottery vases inscribed with names of enemies and the breaking of red jars at the end of the offering ritual are variants of one and the same ritual aimed at the destruction of evil forces lurking beyond the borders of the cosmos.”⁴⁸² This is a likely supposition, and even with the abundance of mortuary attestations, Van Dijk is careful not to restrict his interpretation of the rite to protection of the deceased alone. He notes that, “[a]lthough the ritual may be described in a technical sense as an act of sympathetic magic it is more likely to be interpreted as a rite of reassurance, enacted to reassure and thereby protect the participants of the ritual when they approach the dangerous borderline between the ordered world and the domain of the powers of chaos.”⁴⁸³ Van Dijk thus envisions the overarching ritual of “Breaking the Red Vessels” as an apotropaic one with the ability to protect all those participating in the act, from the living, active practitioners, including priests and kings, to deceased persons and deities.

For any newly-excavated corpus of deliberately broken objects, it is the task of the archaeologist to reconstruct their appropriate ritual setting. It is surprising to note, however, that only recently was it surmised that fragmentary female figurines might be purposely-broken, ritual objects.⁴⁸⁴ Indeed, very few excavators have commented upon the obvious torso-level breakage of their female figurine assemblages.⁴⁸⁵ This is a surprising fact

⁴⁸⁰ Van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ* IV: 1389.

⁴⁸¹ Van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ* IV: 1389-1390; for a detailed study of the Mirgissa deposit, see Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 153-180.

⁴⁸² Van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ* IV: 1393.

⁴⁸³ Van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ* IV: 1393.

⁴⁸⁴ Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*. Cairo: Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale, 2001. 62.

⁴⁸⁵ Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, 62, n.101, is an exception. It should be noted that Geraldine Pinch chooses to dismiss the fragmentary state of many of the figurines discussed and illustrated in her study, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, instead focusing on the “numerous

given not only the consistency of the fractures, but also the abundant literature on deliberately-broken anthropomorphic figurines from a variety of ancient cultures, including Egypt's own male execration figures.⁴⁸⁶ As the above material study has shown, however, the Mut Precinct figurines display patterns of breakage that can only have been enacted purposefully. We may then ask whether these objects, so often colored red, are a component of, or related to, the rite of "Breaking the Red Vessels."

While ceramic female figurines do not appear to have been used in the specific rite of "Breaking the Red Vessels" as elucidated by Van Dijk and others, it may be possible to view them as components of a similar rite. The red hue (*dšr*) of many ceramic female figurines and their deliberate and consistent breakage suggests that they, too, were ritually destroyed prior to disposal. In addition, like the archaeological evidence for the rite of "Breaking the Red Vessels," the physical remains of the female figurines can be linked to texts, which will be discussed in detail in the following chapter. Although it could certainly be argued that, in keeping with Pinch's evaluation of ceramic female figures as votive "fertility figurines," the objects' red coloring is intended to evoke blood as a life-giving substance, when viewed through the lens of other Egyptian rites involving red ceramic objects, and in combination with the fragmentary state of so many of the

intact figurines from burials," (214) and describing the breakage patterns as suggestive of "accidental damage" (341). For a possible later instance of ritual breakage in Egyptian female figurines, see the recent discussion of T.G. Wilfong on the corpus of Late Antique orant figurines from Medinet Habu, whose breakage is localized at the figures' necks: *Women of Jeme: Lives in a Coptic Town in Late Antique Egypt*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002. 77 n.26, 114-116, and pls. 2a and 2b. I thank Dr. Emily Teeter for directing me to this reference. H.D. Schneider has also hypothesized that the red-washed animal figurines of fired silt recently excavated in the vicinity of the Tomb of Horemheb at Memphis, of possible New Kingdom date, "could have been mutilated deliberately" in a ritual similar to that of Breaking the Red Vessels: Hans Diederik Schneider, *The Memphite Tomb of Horemheb, commander-in-chief of Tut'ankhamun II A Catalogue of the Finds*. Leiden: Rijksmuseum van Oudheden and London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1996. 61.

⁴⁸⁶ More on Egyptian execration figures can be found immediately below. For ritually broken female figurines from other ancient cultures, see e.g. Moorey, *Idols of the People*, 10, 17-18, 29, 52-58, 66-67; Nishiyama and Yoshizawa, "Who Worshipped the Clay Goddess?: the late first millennium BC terracotta figurines from Tell Mastuma, Northwest Syria." 73-98; Voight, *Hajji Firuz Tepe, Iran: The Neolithic Settlement*. 175-200; Mitsukazu, Nagamine. "Clay figurines from Jomon society." *Windows on the Japanese Past: Studies in archaeology and prehistory*. Ed. Richard J. Pearson, Gina Lee Barnes, and Karl L. Hutterer. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies, 1986. 255-265.

excavated figurines, the red coloring is better understood as a signifier of an object to be ritually destroyed.

Archaeological evidence has shown that fragmentary ceramic female figurines of the New Kingdom and later bearing red pigment have been found in contexts akin to, although not identical with, the find spots of execration materials, that is, the environs of sacred spaces like cemeteries and temples, as well as habitation zones.⁴⁸⁷ However, it should be noted that these deliberately broken objects are rarely found within specific burials, shrines or rooms. Most often, they are deposited near, but not in, an architecturally defined space.

The preponderance of extant execration vessels and figures are fashioned from clay, both unfired and fired. The earliest deposit of clay execration figures (6th Dynasty) comes from the Teti cemetery at Saqqara, and was found in “a seemingly un-stratified context,” a shaft of the mastaba of Nedjetemhet.⁴⁸⁸ A nearly contemporaneous group of unbaked clay figures dated to the reign of Pepi II derives from the northern area of the Giza cemetery.⁴⁸⁹ More than 400 figurines were found there in four distinct groups, each inscribed with a personal name or list of foreign enemies, although none of the figures seem to be related to a particular burial.⁴⁹⁰ A figure of the 6th Dynasty made of unfired clay but inscribed on both sides with an execration text in red ink has also been found in a foundation layer at Balat (‘Ayn Asil) in Dakhleh oasis.⁴⁹¹ Middle Kingdom ceramic

⁴⁸⁷ For the contexts of execration materials, see Georges Posener, “Ächtungstexte.” *LÄ* I: 67-69; *Cinq Figurines d'Envoûtement*. Cairo: IFAO, 1987; the bibliography in Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 137 n.611, and add Joachim F. Quack, “Some Old Kingdom Execration Figures from the Teti Cemetery.” *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 13 (2002) 149-160. For the contexts of relevant female figurines, see section 1.1 above, **Fig. 10**, and **Appendix A**, including comparanda.

⁴⁸⁸ Quack, “Some Old Kingdom Execration Figures from the Teti Cemetery,” 149.

⁴⁸⁹ A.M. Abu Bakr and Jürgen Osing, “Ächtungstexte aus dem Alten Reich.” *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 29 (1974) 132; Quack, “Some Old Kingdom Execration Figures from the Teti Cemetery,” 154.

⁴⁹⁰ Posener, “Ächtungstexte.” *LÄ* I: 67-68; Van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ* IV:1390; Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 139.

⁴⁹¹ Paule Posener-Kriéger, “Les travaux de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale en 1981-1982.” *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 82 (1982) 384-386; Lisa Giddy, “Rapport Préliminaire sur la Quatrième Campagne de Fouilles à ‘Ayn Asil (Oasis de Dakhleh).” *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 69 (1983) 108; Nicholas C. Grimal, “Note sur les objets inscrits.” *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 69 (1983) 110-112; Grimal, “Les “noyés” de Balat.” *Mélanges offerts à Jean Vercoutter*. Eds. Francis Geus and Florence Thill. Paris: Editions Recherche sur les civilisations, 1985. 111-121.

execration materials are known best from the Mirgissa deposit (Dynasty 12), which included nearly 200 broken, inscribed red vessels, over 400 uninscribed red vases, and 346 mud figures, interred some 600 meters from the fortress itself.⁴⁹² The so-called Berlin bowls, red ceramic vessels inscribed with texts and deliberately broken, have also been dated to the 12th Dynasty, and may derive from a tomb.⁴⁹³ Other, smaller collections of intentionally-broken and inscribed ceramic objects include the baked clay figurines found in the area of the Teti pyramid at Saqqara and dating to the Middle Kingdom, and some Second Intermediate Period figurines from Lisht.⁴⁹⁴ Fragmentary fired clay plaques inscribed with names of the dead persons to be execrated have also been found at Giza, and have been dated to the 18th Dynasty.⁴⁹⁵ Many uninscribed but readily identifiable execration figurines in fired and unfired clay, spanning the Old Kingdom to the Late Period, are also known, being too many to list here.⁴⁹⁶

It is clear from the above review that human figurines of clay were a major component of execration rituals. These anthropomorphic figures usually take the form of bound prisoners or foreigners,⁴⁹⁷ although others are more rudimentary human images, sometimes with truncated limbs.⁴⁹⁸ The presence of known execration texts on the figures – or, in the absence of texts, the fragmentary nature, archaeological context, and/or red coloring of figurines – can signal their use in the rite. And while the majority of the figurines that have thus far been classified by Egyptologists as “execration figures” are male (or have been regarded as male),⁴⁹⁹ inscribed and red-painted female execration figures are also known.⁵⁰⁰ From a technological

⁴⁹² Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 153-154; Posener, “Les Textes d’Envoûtement de Mirgissa.” *Syria* 43 (1966) 277-287.

⁴⁹³ Posener, “Les Textes d’Envoûtement de Mirgissa.” *Syria* 43 (1966) 279.

⁴⁹⁴ Posener, “Ächtungstexte” *LÄ* I: 68.

⁴⁹⁵ Posener, “Ächtungstexte.” *LÄ* I: 68; Posener, “Les Empreintes Magiques de Gizeh et les Morts Dangereux.” *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 16 (1958) 252-270.

⁴⁹⁶ Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 137, and see the bibliography of n.456 above.

⁴⁹⁷ Van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ* IV: 1389; Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 136-162.

⁴⁹⁸ i.e. the Old Kingdom Balat figure: Grimal, “Les “noyés” de Balat,” 111-112 and pl.1.

⁴⁹⁹ The gender bias revealed by the fact that male ceramic figurines are often assigned an execrative function, whereas female ceramic figurines are given a votive and/or fertility function, will be discussed in more detail below.

⁵⁰⁰ Michael Rice Collection, London: Peter Munro, “Zu einigen ägyptischen Terrakotta figuren.” *Göttinger Miszellen* 2 (1972) 28 and Abb. 2, and Ritner, “So-called “Pre-dynastic Hamster-headed” Figurines in London and Hanover.” *Göttinger Miszellen* 111

standpoint, therefore, the Mut Precinct female figures fit well with the Egyptian notion of destroying evil forces through the modeling, coloring, and ritual destruction of clay figures and vessels. Additionally, it should be borne in mind that some female figures from the Mut Precinct are clearly missing arms, which appear to have been cut or snapped off, and others have severely truncated heads, like the male execration figure from ‘Ayn Asil mentioned above and the plaque-like figures from Giza and Saqqara.⁵⁰¹

That many of the fragmentary female figurines from the Mut Precinct were also a type of execration figure “aimed at the destruction of evil forces lurking beyond the borders of the cosmos”⁵⁰² should be seriously considered. Furthermore, their anepigraphic status should not be viewed as a hindrance to this interpretation, for being inscribed with texts was not a necessary component of an execration object, but an optional addition.⁵⁰³ In fact, it should be emphasized that the “Execration texts” themselves do not describe the rite ending in destruction; they merely report the names of the evil forces to be destroyed when the rite is enacted.⁵⁰⁴ Instead, we must turn to other texts, like the magico-medical spells discussed in Chapter 3, in order to gain insight into the impetus for and mechanics of the rite of breaking female figures of clay.

Having reviewed the archaeological context and material composition of the Mut Precinct female figurines, and utilizing comparative ritual evidence such as the rite of “Breaking the Red Vessels,” we can postulate that the breakage of ceramic female figures like those from the Mut Precinct was a symbolic, protective action – or, better, *reaction* – to the object’s initial function. This initial function, as far as we can glean from the textual evidence, was as a magical figure intended to thwart diseases or threatening animals. Because at least one rite asks the female figure to absorb the sufferer’s ailment, the red-colored figure would likely have been

(1989) 85-95 and fig.1.

⁵⁰¹ Quack, “Some Old Kingdom Execration Figurines from the Teti Cemetery,” 156-157 and figures 1 and 2. See catalogue (**Appendix A**) for the Mut Precinct figurines missing arms and with truncated heads.

⁵⁰² Van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ* IV: 1393.

⁵⁰³ Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 137 n.611.

⁵⁰⁴ Posener, “Ächtungstexte.” *LÄ* I: 67-69; Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 142-3; Joris F. Borghouts, “Lexicographical Aspects of Magical Texts.” *Textcorpus und Wörterbuch: Aspekte zur ägyptischen Lexikographie*. Eds. Stefan Grunert and Ingelore Hafemann. Leiden: Brill, 1999. 154; Stephan J. Seidlmayer, “Execration Texts.” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Donald B. Redford. New York: Oxford UP, 2001. I:487.

regarded as a bearer of evil following the magical transference, and would not be an object that either the patient or the practitioner desired to keep. Thus, breaking the figurine in the same manner as one would break red vessels or execration figures would protect both the sufferer and the priest/magician from a recurrence of the disease. ‘Reading’ ceramic female figurines coated in red like the Mut Precinct examples as the physical remains of a magico-medical ritual not unlike the rite of “Breaking the Red Vessels,” which culminated in the destruction of the magical vehicle, is the interpretation favored here.

2.4.2.2 Black

Black pigment is visible on one Type 2 female figurine and one unassigned figurine from the Mut Precinct (cat. nos. 2 and 40), in both cases having been applied to indicate hair on the female’s head. In these cases, the application of black pigment conforms to the usual use of the color in the official canon of Egyptian art. As for its symbolic notions, black (Egyptian *km*) evokes the fertile deposited on the banks of the Nile, and thus the notions of fertility and regeneration. Black was also the color of the Egyptian underworld, where the sun was magically regenerated each night. Black pigment was often applied to images of the deities Osiris, Wepwawet, and Anubis to highlight their underworld connections, and to ithyphallic images of the fertility gods Min and Amun-Re(-Kamutef).⁵⁰⁵ In the Hellenistic period in Egypt, black stone was almost always the material chosen for magical healing statues inscribed with vignettes and spells.⁵⁰⁶ Black is thus a fitting color for Egyptian objects intended to magically ensure general health and fertility, even if it is not the sole color applied to the piece.

2.4.2.3 Blue

As noted above in section 2.2, traces of blue pigment remain on at least one female figurine excavated by Johns Hopkins from the Mut Precinct, an unassigned figure (cat. no. 40). The blue pigment appears to be concentrated on the figure’s head or wig area. Traces of blue paint can also be seen on the heads, bodies, and in some cases, beds, of New Kingdom

⁵⁰⁵ Robins, “Color Symbolism.” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. III: 291,293; Wilkinson, *Symbol and Magic in Egyptian Art*, 109-110; Brunner-Traut, Emma. “Farben.” *LA* II:123.

⁵⁰⁶ Wilkinson. *Symbol and Magic in Egyptian Art*. 110; Raven, “Magic and Symbolic Aspects of Certain Materials,” 238.

female figurines from Memphis/Kom Rabi'a⁵⁰⁷ and Amarna,⁵⁰⁸ although it is difficult to discern any consistent pattern in the application of blue pigment to the figures.

Although blue paint does not appear to have been applied uniformly or consistently to New Kingdom and later female figures, the post-firing application of the pigment has been cited above in section 2.1 as indicative of the polychrome style of painting of the 18th-20th Dynasties, therefore favoring a workshop environment for the production of such figures. As for the symbolic nature of the color blue in ancient Egypt, it was the hue of the sky and also water, and therefore evoked fecundity and life.⁵⁰⁹ Blue was also the color of the imported stone lapis lazuli, and since Egyptian deities were envisioned as having bones of silver, flesh of gold and hair of true lapis lazuli, many Egyptian gods are depicted as having blue wigs and beards.⁵¹⁰ Others, like Amun-Re in the 18th Dynasty, can be shown with blue (i.e. lapis) skin.⁵¹¹ It is perhaps though its association with the hair and/or skin of deities that blue appears on the skin and bodies of some ceramic images of females, giving them a hint of the divine. In addition, as the color of the live-giving element water, blue is a fitting hue for any talisman intended to ensure the health of its owner.

2.4.2.4 White

As noted above in section 2.1, the presence of white pigment on some Type 2 female figures from the Mut Precinct is likely the remains of a calcium-based background layer upon which polychrome pigments would be applied, rather than an intentional coloring in and of itself. Similar patterns of this white-ground technique can be seen on comparative figurines (see catalogue, **Appendix A**). Geraldine Pinch has observed that when white pigment is localized on a Type 2 female figurine, it is usually on the fat cone atop the woman's wig.⁵¹² Although incense cones do not appear on any of the Mut Precinct female figures, white pigment would be expected

⁵⁰⁷ Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 29-30

⁵⁰⁸ Ashmolean Museum 1921-1124/Amarna small finds database <http://www.amarnaproject.com/pages/recent_projects/material_culture/small_finds/database.shtml> no. 21/410; Petrie Museum UC 24515/Amarna small finds database no. 29/394.

⁵⁰⁹ Wilkinson, *Symbol and Magic in Egyptian Art*, 107-108.

⁵¹⁰ Brunner-Traut, "Farben," *LÄ II*: 125; Robins, "Color Symbolism," 292.

⁵¹¹ Wilkinson, *Symbol and Magic in Egyptian Art*, 107-108; Robins, "Color Symbolism," 293.

⁵¹² Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 208.

when such cones are shown, as it was the usual hue used for painted depictions of the incense cone in New Kingdom art.⁵¹³

White was a color that indicated ritual purity,⁵¹⁴ and as the color “almost invariably used to depict the clothing of most Egyptians,”⁵¹⁵ white pigment also appears on the rare example of a clothed, polychrome-painted female figure from Amarna, where it clearly delineates the woman’s short-sleeved dress.⁵¹⁶ In general, however, the white pigment seen on polychrome-painted female figurines is best regarded as remains of a background coating rather than as a localized application of paint. As a base intended to be covered with other pigments, this white would not add much in the way of symbolism to the figure. However, when they do occur, intentional applications of white on female figures (i.e. on incense cones, clothing, etc.) carry with them the concept of purity.

White material of an ambiguous nature has recently been detected on two New Kingdom ceramic cobra figurines from Amarna by Kasia Szpakowska, who notes that “It is difficult to determine if these are the remains of white gypsum paint, or plaster, or naturally formed accretions.”⁵¹⁷ Although Szpakowska does not mention whether the cobras’ pigment was applied before or after firing, the palette (red, black, yellow, blue) is similar to that seen on contemporary polychrome female figures and vessels from the site,⁵¹⁸ and the white material might in fact be the remains of the base upon which the cobras’ polychrome decoration was applied. Szpakowska does note that there are many examples of pottery coated with gypsum plaster from Amarna,⁵¹⁹ although she does not go as far as to classify the cobras as having been decorated in the polychrome technique of vase painting. This hypothesis, however, would likely account for some, if not all, of the white material remaining on her figures.

⁵¹³ Lise Manniche, *Sacred Luxuries: Fragrance, Aromatherapy and Cosmetics in Ancient Egypt*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1999. 85, 96.

⁵¹⁴ Robins, “Color Symbolism,” 291; Wilkinson, *Symbol and Magic in Egyptian Art*, 109.

⁵¹⁵ Wilkinson, *Symbol and Magic in Egyptian Art*, 109.

⁵¹⁶ British Museum EA 55595/Amarna small find 22/85: Pinch, “Childbirth and Female Figurines,” 407-408, discussed in section 2.2 above.

⁵¹⁷ “Playing with Fire: Initial Observations on the Religious Uses of Clay Cobras from Amarna.” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 40 (2003) 118 n.17.

⁵¹⁸ e.g. UC 24524/Amarna small find 30/591, Ashmolean 1921.1124/Amarna small find 21/410; see also Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 85, for the pigments found on female figurines from the site. Note, however, that Stevens curiously omits red from the list of pigments surviving on clay cobras from Amarna (p.100), even though she references Szpakowska’s detailed study (“Playing with Fire”) in the same section (p.102).

⁵¹⁹ “Playing with Fire,” 118 n.17.

One Type 3 figurine from the Mut Precinct (cat. no. 5) may be a further example of a figurine treated with white pigment prior to the application of colored pigment, as white residue remains in the breast, navel, and pubic areas. In this case, red is the most likely pigment to have been applied, being the usual hue found on Type 3 figures.

Finally, figurine VIII G East 2 Level 2 1/14/02 (cat. no. 24, **Fig. 6** above), a Type 5 example, has some circular encrustations of a white material on its front. These do not appear to be detailed applications of pigment, but instead calcium accretions incidental to the figurine.

To conclude this material study, it should be noted that there may be substances used in the manufacture and manipulation of ceramic female figurines like the Mut Precinct types that we cannot recover. For example, Geraldine Pinch has postulated that, "Pottery fertility figurines might...have incorporated drops of menstrual blood from a female donor and/or semen from a male donor or the spittle or hair of donors of either sex."⁵²⁰ While these human components would be appropriate additions according to Pinch's fertility reading of the figures, and the magical uses of such materials is certain,⁵²¹ their addition at the manufacturing stage of the objects may not be likely if the figurines were mass-produced in a workshop setting, as has been proposed here. The addition or application of bodily fluids or other organic materials to the figurines might rather have taken place during the ritual in which the figures were involved, when it would have had the most meaning. That vegetal components, at the very least, were added to female figurines to be used in healing rituals is clear from spells like those in P. Turin 54003, to be detailed in the following chapter. Such organic materials are not likely to have survived a figurine's ritual use and subsequent disposal and are thus difficult to recover archaeologically, but were undoubtedly incorporated into such rituals for their perceived magical properties.⁵²²

2.4.3 *Iconographic Remarks*

The notion that ceramic female figurines like those found at the Mut Precinct were components of a magico-medical rite that culminated in their destruction is a new one. The traditional interpretation of Egyptian female

⁵²⁰ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 340.

⁵²¹ Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, passim.

⁵²² Note that in Mesopotamia, organic materials such as tallow and wax, animal secretions, and vegetal parts could be added to the clay of ghost figurines: JoAnn Scurlock, *Magico-Medical Means of Treating Ghost-Induced Illnesses in Ancient Mesopotamia*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006. 49.

figures from most time periods, but particularly those of the New Kingdom, is as votive “fertility figurines” dedicated to female goddesses or placed in or near tombs. This theory has prevailed since the appearance of Geraldine Pinch’s monograph, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, in 1993.

Pinch’s interpretation of ceramic female figures as “fertility figurines,” which has enjoyed a favorable reception in the field, does not focus on the material components or patterns of breakage of the objects, as has already been noted. Instead, Pinch’s and others’ assessment of Egyptian ceramic female figures relies largely on the iconography of the figures – the nude female, her often elaborate wig and jewelry, the presence of a child, mirror, snake, or floral element alongside the woman – all of which certainly encode notions of ancient Egyptian sexuality and fertility.⁵²³

However, we must bear in mind that while nude female figurines bore obvious erotic overtones, this imagery was functional.⁵²⁴ Female figurines were not ‘art for art’s sake’ to be displayed or admired as such, nor should we assume that they were “women’s objects” connected solely with female health concerns simply because they represent a nude female. The figurines were practical objects manufactured for use in rites. Our task is to inquire how the iconography of the nude female figurines relates to or contributes to their role in magical rites by considering the icon of the nude female in concert with the archaeological and textual evidence for the use of clay female figures.

We have already seen that, with the exception of some Type 2’s, the ceramic female figurines from the Mut Precinct rarely conform to the official canon of (elite) Egyptian art.⁵²⁵ It has also been established that

⁵²³ Pinch, “Childbirth and Female Figurines,” 405-414; Lise Manniche, *Sexual Life in Ancient Egypt*. London and New York: Kegan Paul, 1987. 31-44; Ogden Goelet, “Nudity in Ancient Egypt.” *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 12 (2) (Winter 1993) 25-31; Friedman, “Aspects of Domestic Life and Religion,” 100-101, 114; Gay Robins, “Ancient Egyptian Sexuality,” 61-72; *Women in Ancient Egypt*. London: BM Press, 1993; *Reflections of Women in the New Kingdom: Ancient Egyptian Art from the British Museum*. Atlanta: Emory UP, 1995; “Dress, Undress,” 27-40;

⁵²⁴ Robins, “Dress, Undress,” 30; Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 305; Julia M. Asher-Greve and Deborah Sweeney, “On Nakedness, Nudity, and Gender in Egyptian and Mesopotamian Art.” *Images and Gender: Contributions to the Hermeneutics of Reading Ancient Art*. Ed. Silvia Schroer. Fribourg: Academic Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006. 125-176.

⁵²⁵ Gay Robins and others have linked the iconography of some New Kingdom female figurines, such as the women-on-a-bed figures, to other genres of Egyptian art, including figured ostraca, ancestor busts, the Turin Erotic Papyrus, and domestic and tomb paintings (See the bibliography of n.523 and section 2.2 above). Some types of Third Intermediate Period figurines may also relate to contemporary stelae and statuary in other media (Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, 10). Stevens has pointed out, however, that changes to the formal artistic canon during the Amarna period are not reflected in the female figurines from the

such figurines were mass-produced to standardized forms in state-sponsored workshops. We must therefore regard the iconography of the nude female as an integral feature of the objects, while bearing in mind that each figurine is part of a larger class of homogeneous artifacts. While interpreting individual ceramic female figurines as objets d'art is certainly possible in other contexts,⁵²⁶ I prefer to stress here the fact that ceramic female figurines are, iconographically speaking, a largely uniform group of objects representing a generic, nude female. This icon is regarded as one evocative of bodily health via the representation of a sexual and fertile adult woman. This reading helps us to better understand the figurines' ritual function, which from texts appears to be as an apotropaic or healing talisman applicable to a range of situations. Several reasons for the utilization of a generic image for this type of object will be presented in Chapter 3.

When pondering the figures' iconography, we must also bear in mind such factors as the context of the figurines when excavated, and any textual sources that might shed light on their use. In addition to its heavy reliance on iconography, Pinch's assessment of female figurines makes only partial use of their excavated contexts. As the title of her book suggests, Pinch concentrates on figurines whose context can be connected with Hathor, although these are certainly not the majority of the provenanced figurines listed in her tables. Further, as noted above, Pinch dismisses a crucial element of the excavated female figurines – the evidence for their purposeful breakage – by stating that, “The way in which most of the votive objects...are broken suggests accidental damage” and concluding that while “ritual breakage cannot be entirely ruled out...it was not a standard practice.”⁵²⁷ In a similar fashion, Anna Stevens has recently dismissed the breaking and burning of female figurines from Amarna as incidental, stating that “...there is little indication that this resulted from the deliberate breakage or burning during magical rites,” even though she advocates interpreting the figures as relics of domestic religion at the

site (*Private Religion at Amarna*, 264). Intimate links between the iconography of ceramic female figurines and that of contemporaneous elite females are difficult to prove across the board, and should be suggested with caution.

⁵²⁶ Figurines that exhibit elaborate decoration, such as polychrome painted Type 2's, or which present aberrations, such as EA 55595/Amarna Small Find 22/85 discussed above, are particularly worthy of individual study.

⁵²⁷ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 341.

site.⁵²⁸ The above discussions concerning the durability of ceramic female figurines, the rite of “Breaking the Red Vessels,” and execration figures, should correct these statements, and make clear the deliberate and prevalent nature of the breakage visible on so many Egyptian ceramic female figurines.

It must also be stated here that the interpretation of nude female figurines as votive goods dedicated to ensure women’s reproductive health highlights a gender bias in the study of Egyptian anthropomorphic figurines. Whereas male ceramic figurines of similar dimensions, materials, and, in some cases, contexts and iconography, have received much attention and have been quickly identified as objects utilized in execration rituals,⁵²⁹ female figurines are usually relegated to the sphere of women’s life, namely, the domestic arena or shrines associated with goddesses like Hathor. The danger in making impetuous judgments about the function of ceramic anthropomorphic images can be illustrated by looking at several “bound Nubian” figurines in the British Museum.⁵³⁰

These British Museum figurines have been described as “Uninscribed clay figurines of bound men in foreign dress...probably used in a cursing ritual,”⁵³¹ but their status as representations of bound humans is only clear due to the position of their intact arms,⁵³² and their sex can only be inferred, as the cloth they wear covers the pubic area and resembles a man’s kilt. What is important to note here is that the material, method of manufacture, and iconography of three of these figurines are extremely similar to that of the Type 1 female figurines discussed above. In particular, the British Museum figures exhibit the sloping, shelf head perforated for the insertion of hair, pierced ears, and incised facial features that we have seen on the female figures. They also have breasts indicated. Had we only the upper torso of these figures, minus their arms, they might have been classified as fragments of female, votive “fertility figurines.”

This example, even if somewhat exaggerated, serves to highlight the risk in immediately classifying figures with breasts, or fragments

⁵²⁸ “The Material Evidence for Domestic Religion at Amarna and Preliminary Remarks on its Interpretation.” *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 89 (2003) 158, 160-161; *Private Religion at Amarna*, 281, 314.

⁵²⁹ e.g. Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 93-94, 282.

⁵³⁰ EA 56912-14: Stephen Quirke, *Ancient Egyptian Religion*. London: British Museum Press for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1992. 121, fig.71; Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt* (1994); *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition (2006) 94, fig.49.

⁵³¹ Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt* (1994) 93-4.

⁵³² Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 113-119.

thereof, as representations of females,⁵³³ and the further risk in labeling them votive objects to ensure female fertility, when in fact extremely similar figures exist and look to have been male execration figures. While the British Museum bound figures and the Mut Precinct female figurines likely served different, though related, ritual purposes, such gender-limiting of female figures' ownership and use has prevented alternative interpretations of the figures. It is likely that what Egyptologists have been calling "fertility figurines" are much closer in function to the objects designated "execration figures" than has previously been noted.

Geraldine Pinch is forced to reconcile her theory that female figurines were primarily concerned with conception, childbirth and child rearing with the clear archaeological evidence for male ownership of such objects. While she favors the interpretation that "the majority of the votive figurines were probably dedicated by women," Pinch is correct to note that "the occurrence of fertility figurines in intact male burials suggests that these objects were not used only by women."⁵³⁴ A case in point is the Middle Kingdom burial of a magician at the Ramesseum.

In the shaft of that 13th Dynasty tomb, a box was found containing papyri, including magico-medical spells for protecting women and children, and near the box, a wooden figurine of a Bes dancer, three apotropaic wands, several other ivory wands, baboon and lion figures, a 'paddle doll,' and five female figurines of faience.⁵³⁵ Although in this case, it seems abundantly clear that the figures included in this tomb "belong to the context of protective rites for mothers and children" and Pinch rightly concludes that "this was the tomb of a doctor/magician," she is less certain when proposing that "[p]ossibly such people were called upon to pronounce spells which would invest the fertility figurines with magical power."⁵³⁶ This is in fact very likely, as magico-medical texts make clear: there was a practitioner who had the texts and know-how to manipulate the healing talismans and administer medication, and a patient, who received the treatment from this practitioner. From archaeological and textual evidence,

⁵³³ As Céline Boutantain has noted, "La poitrine peut être aussi bien marquée chez les femmes que chez les hommes. Ce n'est donc pas un critère permettant l'identification du sexe.": "Les figurines en terre crue de la nécropole de Balat." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 99 (1999) 45

⁵³⁴ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 223.

⁵³⁵ James E. Quibell, *The Ramesseum*. London: B. Quaritch, 1898. 3 and pl.3; Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 217.

⁵³⁶ *Votive Offerings*, 217.

we know that the practitioner had to be literate and was usually a man.⁵³⁷ Thus, men like the doctor/magician buried at the Ramesseum can be taken as at least some of the owners of female figurines, which formed a part of their magical kit. That men were the likely consumers and users, not to mention the primary manufacturers, of ceramic and other female figurines has not before been noted, most likely because nude images of females are more often assigned to women on an iconographic basis without further consideration given to their manufacture and/or manipulation.

Pinch, in keeping with her votive scenario, does concede that couples could have jointly dedicated female figures at temples.⁵³⁸ She also accounts for the presence of ceramic female figurines at remote, androcentric sites like Gebel Zeit by supposing that male expedition members offered figurines on behalf of themselves and their family.⁵³⁹ Pinch's dedicatory scenario sees these male figurine owners as largely passive, laying the figures down in a temple or shrine with a prayer for the continuation of their family. A more active role played by the bearer of the figures is, however, suggested by the broken state of so many of our excavated examples. Pinch's vision of the objects as tokens dedicated to a higher being in the hopes of children, while consistent with the figures' iconography, perhaps cannot accommodate this material fact, as one must wonder whether deliberately snapping a figurine upon dedication would have been an appropriate conclusion to a ritual intended "to promote and protect fertility in daily life."⁵⁴⁰

To conclude this chapter, a number of significant facts about ceramic female figurines like those from the Mut Precinct should be reiterated. The first is that, as demonstrated above, such female figures appear to have been mass-produced in urban workshop settings and made to a standardized form. Additionally, most New Kingdom and later ceramic female figures were fashioned from the reddish-hued Nile silt clay and

⁵³⁷ Stephen Quirke, "Women of Lahun (Egypt 1800 BC)." *Archaeology and Women: Ancient and Modern Issues*. Eds. Sue Hamilton, Ruth D. Whitehouse and Katherine I. Wright. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2007. 258; Joris F. Borghouts, "Witchcraft, Divination and Magic in Ancient Egypt." *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Ed. Jack M. Sasson. New York: Scribner, 1995. III:1783-1784; Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition (2006) 51-60, 131; Paul Ghalioungui, *The Physicians of Pharaonic Egypt*. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag P. von Zabern, 1983. 1-37, although one female physician (*swmwt*) is attested in the mastaba of Akhet-hetep at Giza: Ghalioungui, *The Physicians*, 18, 65, 92 and "Les plus anciennes femmes medicines de l'Histoire." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 75 (1975) 159-164.

⁵³⁸ *Votive Offerings*, 223.

⁵³⁹ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 223.

⁵⁴⁰ Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 225.

many retain red pigment. It is imperative to note that red was a color with negative associations for the Egyptians, particularly with regard to bodily health, and we have seen that red was the hue used for ceramic execration materials and texts. Also important to recall is that ceramic female figures have been excavated in all manner of contexts, from male and female burials to temples, houses, and mining outposts, and are often found in refuse zones near those structures. A major attribute of ceramic female figurines that is being investigated for the first time is that the objects are most often found in fragments that suggest deliberate torso-level breakage. Lastly, the iconography of the figurines – a generic nude female – includes elements that suggest a connection with fertility and sexuality. The question remains, how can we arrive at a function for ceramic female figurines that incorporates all of this data?

As already stated, one cannot rely on iconography alone when written sources and archaeological data are also available to aid in our interpretation of Egyptian female figurines. As Sarah M. Nelson notes, “The tendency to call all female figurines “fertility figures” is found especially in the Mediterranean...,” but “[i]dentifying figurines that actually relate to fertility is problematical without written corroboration.”⁵⁴¹ The Egyptian texts relating to female figures of clay, to be discussed in Chapter 3, in fact do not demonstrate an exclusively female or reproductive use for the objects. Rather, the texts relate two different situations in which the figures were employed in order to ensure the general health of a person, be the patient a man or a woman. These magico-medical texts calling for female figures of clay are not specifically addressed by the scholars who favor a votive reading for the figurines,⁵⁴² but they appear to be the key that can link the physical figurines with their ancient function.

⁵⁴¹ Sarah Milledge Nelson, *Gender in Archaeology: Analyzing Power and Prestige*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 1997. 162.

⁵⁴² Pinch appears to obliquely refer to one of the texts discussed below as “evidence for fertility figurines being involved in magical rites in the late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period” on p. 354 of *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, but prefers to see such figurines as “votive objects...known or thought to be instruments of protective magic in other contexts.” She thus separates what she believes are the two uses of ceramic female figurines: dedicated votive objects to Hathor, which for her is the figures’ primary function, and magical ritual objects. These two are likely part of the same general function of female figures, as apotropaic healing objects that could be utilized as the needed by the patient. Stevens (*Private Religion at Amarna*, 93) mentions in passing the stomachache spell discussed below as a scenario in which female figurines – a class of objects she curiously separates out from “fertility figurines” – might have been manufactured, but without further analysis.

As Joris Borghouts notes, “One of the difficulties in reconstructing Egyptian religion is that it is often hard to find connections between surviving texts and artifacts. Because texts are the more informative of the two types of source, the more reliable information about Egyptian magic and magical practice comes from the spells.”⁵⁴³ The two principal texts that will be discussed in Chapter 3 are roughly contemporary with the Mut Precinct figurines and contain quite specific descriptions of clay female figures and their uses in magical rites. These texts relieve us from having to conjure the figures’ function based on iconography and/or context alone, and enable us to “focus the amorphous idea of fertility on more concrete concerns”⁵⁴⁴ by suggesting the specific circumstances under which ceramic female figurines were used, broken, and discarded.

As we move to an analysis of these texts, it is important to bear in mind that what is usually referred to as the Egyptian concern with fertility – a concept that is clearly exuded by the imagery of the nude female figures – might be better thought of as a more general concern with health that includes, but is not restricted to, the ability to have sexual relations and/or to procreate. Magico-medical texts highlight the detailed anatomical and pharmaceutical knowledge of the ancient Egyptians, and express a desire to properly diagnose and treat all bodily ailments – from brain hemorrhages to toothaches – in order to preserve such fertility.⁵⁴⁵ These texts are also particularly concerned with the threat of scorpion or snake bites.⁵⁴⁶ As will be detailed presently, female figures of clay are prescribed in these texts to both heal bodily ailments and repel venomous animals, the result of which would be a healthy, and thus still potentially fertile, human being. This broad reading of fertility will help us to link the outward appearance of the figures with their use in the rituals described in the texts, and will enable us to arrive at a more complete picture of the function of ceramic female figures like those found at the Mut Precinct.

⁵⁴³ Borghouts, “Witchcraft, Magic, and Divination in Ancient Egypt,” 1777.

⁵⁴⁴ Alexander H. Joffe, J.P. Dessel and Rachel S. Hallote. “The ‘Gilat Woman’: Female Iconography, Chalcolithic Cult, and the End of Southern Levantine Prehistory.” *Near Eastern Archaeology* 64 (1/2) (2001) 13.

⁵⁴⁵ Joris Borghouts’ definition of ‘fertility magic’ as “safeguarding natural fertility by removing its impediments” is relevant here: Joris F. Borghouts, “Lexicographical Aspects of Magical Texts.” *Textcorpus und Wörterbuch: Aspekte zur ägyptischen Lexikographie*. Eds. Stefan Grunert and Ingelore Hafemann. Leiden: Brill, 1999. 152 n.4.

⁵⁴⁶ Kent R. Weeks, “Medicine, Surgery, and Public Health in Ancient Egypt.” *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Ed. Jack M. Sasson. New York: Scribner, 1995. III: 1787-1798.

3 TEXTUAL SOURCES FOR INTERPRETING CLAY FIGURINES

“Only the consultation of textual sources, in combination with a typological classification of the archaeological material, may eventually enable us to be more specific in our assessment.”⁵⁴⁷

3.1 Introduction to the Textual Study

Egyptian ceramic figurines of nude females uncovered in controlled excavations, such as those under discussion here, cannot be analyzed using context and iconography alone. While it is true that “it is often hard to find connections between surviving texts and artifacts,”⁵⁴⁸ a limited number of textual sources that can shed light on the Egyptian use and conception of female figures exist,⁵⁴⁹ and must be consulted. This chapter will provide translations and commentary for the two main magico-medical spells that specifically call for female figures of clay to be utilized in a ritual setting. These texts are the most direct written evidence for the place of such objects in Egyptian life. While scholars have lamented that, “Little information can be obtained from...texts about the social functions of magic and sorcery itself, or about the necessary conditions and the non-verbal procedures that followed,”⁵⁵⁰ the texts presented below, when read in combination with archaeological evidence like deliberately broken figures, enable us to arrive at a fuller understanding of the rituals in which such spells were employed. Although the following texts were published with commentary some 35 years ago, having received the attention of philologists and specialists in Egyptian magic,⁵⁵¹ they have never before

⁵⁴⁷ Maarten J. Raven, “Magic and Symbolic Aspects of Certain Materials in Ancient Egypt.” *Varia Aegyptiaca* 4 (1988) 238.

⁵⁴⁸ Joris F. Borghouts, “Witchcraft, Divination and Magic in Ancient Egypt.” *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Ed. Jack M. Sasson. New York: Scribner, 1995. III: 1777.

⁵⁴⁹ Contra Robins, who, when speaking of female figurines as votive objects, has stated that, “One can only conjecture why they were offered as there are no texts to tell us...”: Gay Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1993. 76.

⁵⁵⁰ Joris F. Borghouts, “Magical Texts.” *Textes et langages de l’Égypte pharaonique: cent cinquante années de recherches, 1822-1972. Hommage à Jean-François Champollion*. Vol. 3. Cairo: IFAO, 1972. 18.

⁵⁵¹ Alessandro Roccati, *Papiro Ieratico N. 54003: Estratti magici e rituali del Primo Medio Regno*. Torino: Edizioni D’Arte Fratelli Pozzo, 1970; Borghouts, *The Magical Texts of Papyrus Leiden I 348*. Leiden: Brill, 1971.

been analyzed together with the physical figurines to which they seem to refer.⁵⁵²

3.2 Magico-Medical Texts Calling for Female Figures of Clay

Most Egyptologists agree that Egyptian texts on the prevention and treatment of disease should not be labeled as exclusively ‘medical,’ ‘magical,’ or ‘religious,’ given that the Egyptians themselves made little to no distinction between these modern categories.⁵⁵³ Nearly every protective or healing spell (Egyptian *r* “utterance” or *šnt* “conjunction,” literally “encircling,”⁵⁵⁴) includes elements that could be called magical – such as words to be recited over the medications or the patient – or religious, like the association of the sufferer and/or healer with Egyptian deities.

⁵⁵² As noted in Chapter 2, Geraldine Pinch makes brief mention of “evidence for fertility figurines being involved in magical rites in the late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period,” presumably referring to one of the texts to be addressed below, but does not pursue the point (*Votive Offerings to Hathor*. Oxford: Griffith Institute/Ashmolean Museum, 1993. 354). In another publication, Pinch notes that “it is possible” that the Leiden text discussed below “is referring to a type of nude female figurine which was used as a fertility charm,” while continuing to regard the objects as primarily associated with childbirth (*Magic in Ancient Egypt*. London: British Museum Press, 1994. 99-100; *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition (2006) 100). As also noted above, Stevens mentions the Leiden spell as a scenario in which female figurines might have been manufactured, while still viewing the objects as primarily votive (*Private Religion at Amarna*, 93). Elsewhere, the disjunction between magical texts and magical artifacts has been highlighted by e.g. Jacobus Van Dijk, “Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe.” *LÄ IV*: 1389 and Borghouts, “Witchcraft, Magic, and Divination in Ancient Egypt,” 1777. Borghouts has also expressed the need for more in-depth studies of these types of magico-medical texts: “Magical Texts,” 7-19.

⁵⁵³ James H. Walker, “The Place of Magic in the Practice of Medicine in Ancient Egypt.” *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 1 (1990) 85-95; Borghouts, “Magical Texts,” 11-12, and “Lexicographical Aspects of Magical Texts.” *Textcorpus und Wörterbuch: Aspekte zur ägyptischen Lexikographie*. Eds. Stefan Grunert and Ingelore Hafemann. Leiden: Brill, 1999. 160-162; Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 4-6 and “Magic.” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Donald B. Redford. New York: Oxford UP, 2001, passim; Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt* (1994) and *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition (2006) 133-134; John F. Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine*. London: British Museum Press, 1996. 96-97; Willeke Wendrich, “Entangled, connected or protected? The power of knots and knotting in Ancient Egypt.” *Through a Glass Darkly: Magic, Dreams and Prophecy in Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Kasia Szpakowska. Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2006. 243. Both Borghouts and Ritner note, however, that the *Grundriss der Medizin der alten Ägypter* treats magical texts inadequately.

⁵⁵⁴ Borghouts, “Witchcraft, Magic, and Divination in Ancient Egypt,” 1777.

I therefore employ the mediating term “magico-medical” to describe this type of document.⁵⁵⁵

A lexicographical search for clay figures in magico-medical texts is best performed by focusing on Egyptian words for “clay,” rather than words for “image,” as terms for the former are less frequent, and thus more easily spotted, than the many words for the latter. In addition, despite the numerous Egyptian words for “image” or “statue” (e.g. *twṭ*, *ḳd*), there is no one word that specifically designates a “figurine.”

The search for Egyptian terms for “clay” in magico-medical texts reveals specific terminology and patterns of usage. As noted in Chapter 2, we learn from literary and magical texts that figures of humans, animals or deities could be fashioned from the materials *t3*, *ṁt*, *im*, or *sin(t)*. The latter two terms are the most important for our purposes because both appear repeatedly in magico-medical texts, both clearly connote a malleable material used in the production of images, and both can be qualified by words that describe the object into which the material was formed. In addition, the terms *im* and *sin(t)* often appear at the end of a magical recipe or spell, where ritual instructions for the practitioner are located.

The term *im*⁵⁵⁶ appears several times in P. Ebers and P. Hearst as a part of the phrase *im n twṭ*.⁵⁵⁷ There is some ambiguity in this expression, however, as Egyptologists have struggled to find an exact translation for the word *im*.

The *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache* defines *im* as “Ton. Lehm,”⁵⁵⁸ and this definition has been largely accepted.⁵⁵⁹ Nevertheless, it is important to note that the word *im* still presents difficulties. J.R. Harris relates that “[t]he various examples of *im* are not in themselves conclusive, and all that can be said is that it was a material from which statues were

⁵⁵⁵ The author considers this term an accurate description of the texts to be discussed below, although Paul F. O'Rourke has rightly pointed out the ambiguity that might result from using such hyphenated terms, and has himself attempted to parse the difference between true Egyptian medical texts and those that might be better called apotropaic or protective texts: “An Egyptian Royal Book of Protection of the Late Period (P. Brooklyn 47.218.49).” Dissertation, New York University, 2002. 32-34.

⁵⁵⁶ *WB I*: 78.2-3.

⁵⁵⁷ Eb. 376 (59,21-60,1), Eb. 511 (69,19-20), Eb. 695 (85,13-14)= Papyrus Hearst 142 (10,1-2): Hermann Grapow, *Die Medizinischen Texte in Hieroglyphischer Umschreibung Autographiert. Grundriss der Medizin der alten Ägypter V*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1958. 31, 91, 364.

⁵⁵⁸ *WB I*: 78.2.

⁵⁵⁹ But see the remarks of John R. Harris, *Lexicographical Studies in Ancient Egyptian Minerals*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1961. 200, and the discussion below.

made, which was used in wall decoration, and which could be glazed.”⁵⁶⁰ While Harris does note that “clay” is a possible translation given the above contexts, he concludes that “[t]here is clearly some inconsistency here, and it may be that in *im* we have a more or less generic term for plastic material, covering clays and frits.”⁵⁶¹

Recent studies reiterate Harris’ conclusions about *im* being a term for any kind of malleable paste, while still favoring the translation “clay” in a number of specific contexts. For example, Sydney Aufrère defines the phrase *im n twt* as “clay for a figurine,” and notes that in the Coffin Texts, the deceased is said to be made of *im* as he was when the potter deity Khnum fashioned him at birth.⁵⁶² Nunn lists *im* as one of several words for clay used in remedies of mineral origin,⁵⁶³ likely referring to the same Ebers and Hearst prescriptions noted above. Peter Dorman takes the phrase *im n twt* “to mean ‘clay for statue(s),’”⁵⁶⁴ but also reads it more loosely when he states that “[s]everal prescriptions in pEbers call for the use of statuettes made of clay...,”⁵⁶⁵ suggesting that for him, the phrase refers to a finished product.

In keeping with the tendency to translate *im* as “clay,” we find two possible translations for the phrase *im n twt*. The first is “clay of a statue,” with the *n* being genitival. This reading might suggest that sherds from a broken statue of fired clay are to be used in the prescription. However, the statue or image (*twt*) could also have been of unfired clay, and therefore the phrase might also indicate raw clay. The second translation, “clay for a statue,” with the *n* being a dative, would more strongly suggest that *im* is the raw clay used in the fashioning of an image.

The prescriptions in which the phrase *im n twt* appears do not offer much assistance in determining whether the material specified is fired or unfired. One recipe, for the treatment of the eye, instructs the practitioner to mix the *im n twt* with plant matter and honey, grind up the ingredients, and anoint the patient’s eyes with the resulting salve.⁵⁶⁶ The instruction to

⁵⁶⁰ Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 200, with references.

⁵⁶¹ Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 200.

⁵⁶² CT IV, 1e, 35f ; Sydney Aufrère, *L’ univers minéral dans la pensée égyptienne*. Cairo: IFAO, 1990. 682.

⁵⁶³ Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine*, 146 Table 7.3, and the discussion below.

⁵⁶⁴ Peter F. Dorman, *Faces in Clay: technique, imagery, and allusion in a corpus of ceramic sculpture from Ancient Egypt*. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag P. von Zabern, 2002. 30 n.171.

⁵⁶⁵ Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 30.

⁵⁶⁶ Eb. 376 (59,21-60,1).

finely grind (*nd šn*⁵⁶⁷) the mixture might here favor interpreting *im n twt* as fired clay. However, the two other prescriptions in which *im n twt* appears suggest that raw clay or another viscous substance is being prescribed. The first, a prescription for treating a wound, instructs the practitioner to mix the material with plant and mineral components and anoint (*gs*⁵⁶⁸) the sufferer with the unguent.⁵⁶⁹ The other, a prescription “for bursting open anything” (*snhp ht nbt*), tells the practitioner to mix the *im n twt* with plants, oil, and wax, heat the mixture, strain it (*th*⁵⁷⁰), and present it to the patient to drink.⁵⁷¹ These latter concoctions might have been more easily prepared and administered using raw clay. Given these varied contexts and modes of preparation, the exact nature of the material *im n twt* remains ambiguous, although clay – whether fired or unfired – remains the favored translation.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to relate the image (*twt*) of the phrase *im n twt* to female figurines specifically. The word *twt* appears to be a generic Egyptian term for a figure or statue, and can designate images or either males or females.⁵⁷² While we do find the term employed in number of other magico-medical texts, such as the Late Period anti-snake papyrus in Brooklyn, in which it is used for images of Ptah, Isis, and Selket,⁵⁷³ *twt* is not found exclusively in magico-medical literature. For example, it is used as a designation for wooden statues of male deities in economic texts from Deir el-Medina,⁵⁷⁴ and can be found in countless other texts of all genres.

⁵⁶⁷ *WB* II: 370, II.

⁵⁶⁸ *WB* V: 201-202.

⁵⁶⁹ Eb. 511 (69,19-20).

⁵⁷⁰ *WB* I: 236-247; Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine*, 139, 218.

⁵⁷¹ Eb. 695 (85,13-14) = Papyrus Hearst 142 (10,1-2).

⁵⁷² *WB* V: 255-256. On a comparative note, Erica Reiner observed that it is difficult to isolate the Akkadian word for magical figurine because “the numerous magic rituals that use figurines...simply direct the magic practitioner to fashion one or several *salmu*’s. This term *salmu* can designate any figural representation, rock-relief or statue in the round, from life-size and larger-than-life-size to the smallest ornament worn as jewelry, and may even refer to the shape of a constellation.”: “Magic Figurines, Amulets, and Talismans.” *Monsters and Demons in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds: papers presented in honor of Edith Porada*. Eds. Ann E. Farkas, Prudence O. Harper and Evelyn B. Harrison. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag P. von Zabern, 1987. 29.

⁵⁷³ Serge Sauneron, *Un traité égyptien d’ophiologie. Papyrus du Brooklyn Museum No. 47.218.48 et .85*. Cairo: IFAO, 1989. 107, §79c; Christian Leitz, ed. *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*. Leuven and Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2002. I: 63.

⁵⁷⁴ Jac. J. Janssen, *Commodity Prices from the Ramessid Period: an economic study of the village of Necropolis workmen at Thebes*. Leiden: Brill, 1975. 246-248, with references; Kathlyn M. Cooney, “The Value of Private Funerary Art in Ramesside Period Egypt.” Dissertation, The Johns Hopkins University, 2002. I: 104-106. In several of the texts cited

We therefore cannot connect the phrase *im n twt* found in the Ebers and Hearst papyri to ceramic female figurines like the Mut Precinct examples without additional description of the image. However, with *im* as a possible term for clay, this must remain a possibility.

More fruitful for the present study are those magico-medical texts that describe rituals involving images made of *sin(t)*. *sin(t)* is a more certain Egyptian word for “clay,” whose “basic meaning seems never to have been questioned.”⁵⁷⁵ Unlike the more troublesome term *im*, *sin* is specifically given as a raw material used in the making of pots in a number of instances.⁵⁷⁶ It is also the Egyptian word used to describe the composition of magical objects like bricks, balls, and figures of the deity Anubis, as well as ibises, scorpions, and cobras.⁵⁷⁷

Harris has suggested that as *ꜥht* is the usual word for “common pottery clay,” *sin* must be “something quite distinct,” “a particular species of clay,” given its use as the material of numerous magical objects, the seals of shrines and doors, and its occasional qualification with the word *wꜣd* (literally “green” or “fresh”).⁵⁷⁸ He proposes “marl” or “special clay” as translations for *sin*.⁵⁷⁹ Although Dorman has adopted Harris’ suggestion of *sin(t)* as the word for “marl,”⁵⁸⁰ this translation does not seem to fit the archaeological evidence, because extant magical bricks and seals are made of Nile silt similar to that used in the production of pottery vessels.⁵⁸¹ Also,

by Janssen and Cooney, the word *twt* used to designate a statue of a male deity statue is contrasted with the term *rpyt*, a more certain term for female statue. More will be said about the term *rpyt* below.

⁵⁷⁵ Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 202.

⁵⁷⁶ Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 203 and n.5, with references; Meeks, *Année lexicographique*. I: 307.

⁵⁷⁷ Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 202-204; Aufrère, *L’univers minéral*, 682-3; Joris F. Borghouts, *The Magical Texts of Papyrus Leiden I 348*. Leiden: Brill, 1971. 19-20, 25, 29; Ritner, “O. Gardiner 363: A Spell Against Night Terrors.” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 27 (1990) 25-41; Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 30; Christian Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri of the New Kingdom*. London: British Museum Press for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1999. 70.

⁵⁷⁸ Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 203-204.

⁵⁷⁹ Harris, *Lexicographical Studies*, 204.

⁵⁸⁰ Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 30 and n.167.

⁵⁸¹ Rostislav Holthoer, *New Kingdom Pharaonic Sites: The Pottery*. The Scandinavian Joint Expedition to Sudanese Nubia Publications v. 5 (1). Stockholm: Esselte Studium, 1977. 39; David P. Silverman, “Magical Bricks of Hunuro.” *Studies in Honor of William Kelly Simpson*. Ed. Peter der Manuelian. Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1996. II: 731.

the majority of surviving human and animal figurines that can be identified as magical in function are made of Nile silt clay.⁵⁸²

Nevertheless, that *sin* refers to a special type of clay used in magical rites is clear from its repeated use in texts describing figures to be manipulated in apotropaic and healing rituals. To quote Sydney Aufrère, “Il est à presumer que ces matières ductiles [*im* and *sin*] – pures, puisque additionnées d’encens – se chargeaient facilement d’un pouvoir magique, de même que la cire, autre matière ductile.”⁵⁸³ Aufrère is also correct to highlight the relationship between the noun *sin* and the homophonous verb “to rub,”⁵⁸⁴ and aptly describes *sin* as “une terre qui a subi un travail de transformation.”⁵⁸⁵ It is perhaps best, then, to view *sin* not as an organic classification for a type of clay, but as a notional term, a word that conveys that the material was one mixed and worked into something else. The translations “special clay,” “clay to be rubbed/mixed,” and even the more nuanced “clay for an object to be rubbed,” are all possible for the word *sin*, given the Egyptian penchant for polyvalence in their vocabulary.⁵⁸⁶

In relation to the above definitions, *sin* also looks to be a word that can stand alone as a term for “clay thing” or “clay figure,” with the play on

⁵⁸² Figures made of more perishable materials such as wood or wax were also used in magical rites, but are not as likely to survive in the archaeological record: Joachim F. Quack, “Some Old Kingdom Execration Figurines from the Teti Cemetery,” *Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 13 (2002) 154–155. For references to and illustrations of numerous magical figures of clay, see e.g. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, Chapter 4, passim; Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition (2006) Chapter 7, passim. As noted in Chapter 2, contemporary authors are making a greater effort to distinguish between Nile silt and marl clay when discussing figurines in archaeological reports and specialized studies, e.g. Lisa Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II: Kom Rabi’a: the New Kingdom and Post-New Kingdom Objects*. London: EES, 1999; Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*. Cairo: Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale, 2001; Kasia Szpakowska, “Playing with Fire: Initial Observations on the Religious Uses of Clay Cobras from Amarna,” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 40 (2003) 113–122. In other cases, an object’s medium must be inferred from descriptions and photographs, e.g. Bernard Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Médineh (1934–5)*. Cairo: IFAO, 1939. 139 fig. 58, 142 fig. 59, and pls. XLIII–XLV.

⁵⁸³ Aufrère, *L’univers minéral*, 683.

⁵⁸⁴ *WB* III: 425; Hermann Grapow, Hildegard von Deines and Wlfhart Westendorf, eds. *Wörterbuch der medizinischen Texte. Grundriss der Medizin der alten Ägypter VII*, 2. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1961–62. 716–717.

⁵⁸⁵ Aufrère, *L’univers minéral*, 682.

⁵⁸⁶ For similar comments regarding “the semantic and mythical polyvalence of the stem *šdi*,” see László Kákósy, *Egyptian Healing Statues in Three Museums in Italy (Turin, Florence, Naples)*. Torino: Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali – Soprintendenza al Museo delle Antichità Egizie, 1999. 12.

rubbing inherent, as such objects were likely to have been rubbed by the patient or practitioner in magico-medical rituals. We will see that this translation is appropriate in a spell from Papyrus Turin 54003, discussed immediately below. This more nuanced translation is significant in two ways. First, as we have seen, *sin* has thus far been treated as a vague term for a special type of clay, or erroneously translated “marl.” Second, Egyptian terms for magical figures are elusive. As Borghouts notes, “only a few terms for the [magical] artefacts themselves are known.”⁵⁸⁷ Ritner’s identification of *rst* as the Egyptian word for “execration figure” is one major contribution to this lexicon,⁵⁸⁸ and we should bear in mind that these objects, too, are described as being made of *sin(t)*.⁵⁸⁹ This study asserts that the term *sin* should be recognized as a further designation for “magical figurine,”⁵⁹⁰ being used to designate a clay female figure in at least one text, Papyrus Turin 54003.

3.2.1 P. Turin 54003 rt. 13-16

The first text to be presented here in full is one of two magico-medical spells specifically calling for a female figure of *sin* to be utilized in the ritual. A spell to repel snakes, it is one of numerous incantations included on Papyrus Turin 54003. A single sheet of papyrus with unknown provenance, P. Turin 54003 was presented in facsimile with transcription, transliteration, translation, and commentary by Alessandro Roccati in 1970.⁵⁹¹ Joris Borghouts, Jürgen Osing, and Hans-Werner Fischer-Elfert

⁵⁸⁷ Borghouts, “Lexicographical Aspects,” 154-155.

⁵⁸⁸ Robert K. Ritner, “So-called “Pre-dynastic Hamster-headed” Figurines in London and Hanover.” *Göttinger Miszellen* 111 (1989) 86-93.

⁵⁸⁹ P. London 10081: Siegfried Schott, “Drei Sprüche gegen Feinde.” *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 65 (1930) 41-42. More on this text can be found below in section 3.3

⁵⁹⁰ A previously identified term for “female figure” or “female image” is *rpyt*, although this only designates a clay image when followed by the genitival expression *n(t) sin(t)*; see the commentary on P. Leiden I 348 rt. 12,2-12,4 below. Also note that while the translation “statue” or “private statue” (in a temple) has been suggested for a related word *sin*, determined with three pellets (Gardiner Sign-list N33) (*WB* IV: 38; Hannig, *Grosses Handwörterbuch*, 666), the term under discussion here is determined with the pustule (?) (Gardiner Sign-list Aa 2), canal (Gardiner Sign-list N23), and/or plural strokes (Gardiner Sign-list Z2) (*WB* IV: 37-38; Hannig, *Grosses Handwörterbuch*, 666).

⁵⁹¹ *Papiro Ieratico N. 54003: Estratti magici e rituali del Primo Medio Regno*. Torino: Edizioni D’Arte Fratelli Pozzo, 1970.

have also published translations of the anti-snake spell that interests us here.⁵⁹²

Roccati dates the text of P. Turin 54003 to the First Intermediate Period based on its language and orthography,⁵⁹³ and notes that the grammar is completely Middle Egyptian.⁵⁹⁴ He also stresses that the spells in the Turin papyrus – especially the anti-snake formulae – have resonance with earlier compositions such as the Pyramid Texts, as well as with their Middle Kingdom counterpart, the Coffin Texts.⁵⁹⁵ This continuity has also been highlighted by Borghouts in his compendium of magical texts.⁵⁹⁶ Roccati dates the manuscript to the Middle Kingdom using the form, language, orthography, and content of the papyrus,⁵⁹⁷ a date which has been modified only slightly.⁵⁹⁸

The spell that concerns us here is on the recto of P. Turin 54003; it is labeled number III in the Roccati publication. Written in Hieratic, the spell is located in the approximate middle of the sheet as preserved. It begins with a horizontally-written title in red ink at the top of the papyrus, and continues with just over four columns of vertical text (columns 13-16), parts of which are also written in red.⁵⁹⁹ A vertical line in black ink was drawn just to the right of the title of spell III. It is approximately four centimeters long and divides column 12 from column 13 – that is, it forms a division between spells II and III. A curved black line was also drawn around the last few words of this spell, which spill over into the next column, in order to indicate to the reader that these words belong to this, and not the subsequent, spell. Textual notes can be found in the footnotes accompanying the translation below, and a commentary on the spell and its relationship to archaeological material will follow.

⁵⁹² Joris Borghouts, trans. *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*. Leiden: Brill, 1978. 91; Jürgen Osing, “Zu einigen magischen Texte.” *The Intellectual Heritage of Egypt: Studies Presented to László Kákósy by Friends and Colleagues on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday*. Ed. Ulrich Luft. Budapest: Chaire d'Égyptologie de l'Univ. Eötvös Lor nd de Budapest, 1992. 473-480; Hans-Werner Fischer-Elfert, *Altägyptische Zaubersprüche*. Stuttgart: P. Reclam, 2005. 54, 140.

⁵⁹³ Roccati, *Papiro Ieratico*, 12.

⁵⁹⁴ Roccati, *Papiro Ieratico*, 12, 20.

⁵⁹⁵ Roccati, *Papiro Ieratico*, 12.

⁵⁹⁶ Borghouts, “Magical Texts,” 11.

⁵⁹⁷ Roccati, *Papiro Ieratico*, 12.

⁵⁹⁸ Osing dates the manuscript to the early Middle Kingdom (“Zu einigen magischen Texten,” 473) and Fischer-Elfert assigns it to Dynasties 11-12 (*Altägyptische Zaubersprüche*, 140).

⁵⁹⁹ Words written in red ink in the original are unlined in the transliteration and translation given here.



Fig. 11: P. Turin 54003 rt. 13-16

3.2.1.1 Transliteration

Title *r n šnʿt n ḥfzw*

13) *ḥsf ʒt.k ḥzb(w) m ʒtw.f iw ttf.n.i mdz(w)t.k m sin pw*

14) *n ʒst pr(w) ḥr ḥttt nt srkt dbʿ.i ʒʒ.f sin ḥn.f*

15) *iw tr tn sp sn mk st ʿʒ m st (i)r(y)⁶⁰⁰ m ph ks m pšn*

16) *mt r pht.k wdz r.i dd mdw ḥr sin šny dmt im.f šʒrt [ḥbs⁶⁰¹]w dbit ʿn r-pw*

3.2.1.2 Translation

Title Spell for the warding off of a snake

13) “Repelling your striking power,⁶⁰² that which was sent⁶⁰³ as its furious one.⁶⁰⁴ I have poured out⁶⁰⁵ your magical books⁶⁰⁶ with this clay [figure]

⁶⁰⁰ Plausibly read as such by Roccati, *Papiro Ieratico*, 26 and n.g, with references.

⁶⁰¹ *ḥbsw* is one possibility suggested by Roccati for a word determined with the cloth sign to fit in the lacuna towards the end of column 16: *Papiro Ieratico*, 27 n.i.

⁶⁰² *WB I*: 2. J.R. Ogdon has studied this word and its use in magical texts, and convincingly argues that *ʒt* simultaneously means “just moment/instant” and “striking power”: “Studies in Ancient Egyptian Magical Writing 2; Apropos of the Word *ʒt*.” *Göttinger Miszellen* 164 (1998) 79-83. The latter translation, its original root meaning, is employed here to convey the threat inherent in the snake. See also Ritner, “O. Gardiner 363: A Spell Against Night Terrors,” 31, and Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri*, 29 n.171.

⁶⁰³ Following Borghouts’ translation of *ḥzb(w)* as a passive participle: *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 91 and “Lexicographical Studies,” 158 n.24. In the latter, Borghouts cites this construction as an obvious signal that animals like snakes and scorpions “are supposed to have been *sent* on purpose – their presence seems due to the influence of evil-willing spirits, the restless deceased.” More on this notion and its implications for our reading of the text will be said below.

⁶⁰⁴ As noted by Roccati (*Papiro Ieratico*, 26 n.b), the spelling *ʒt* is probably influenced by the following *ʒtw*, itself a variant writing of *ʒdw* “furious one,” “aggressor”: *WB I*: 24; Hannig, *Grosses Handwörterbuch*, 18. Like *ʒt/ʒt*, *ʒdw* is a negative force that must be repelled (*ḥsf*), stemming from the root word *ʒd* “crocodile”: *WB I*: 24, 22 and Hermann Grapow and Wolja Erichsen, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*. Die Belegstellen. Vol. I. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs and Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1935-1953.

⁶⁰⁵ Roccati has already noted (*Papiro Ieratico*, 26 n.c) that the known meanings of *ttf* (*WB V*: 411-413) are difficult to fit into the context of this spell; he offers the translation “I have wet” (“Ho bagnato”). Borghouts translates “I have scattered” (*Ancient Egyptian Magical*

14) of Isis which comes out under the armpit⁶⁰⁷ of Selqet. My finger is its protection, the clay⁶⁰⁸ its guard.⁶⁰⁹

Texts, 91). O'Rourke has similar difficulty with the term in his translation of the Late Period protection book, P. Brooklyn 47.218.49; he suggests "poured down (?)" (Paul F. O'Rourke, "An Egyptian Royal Book of Protection of the Late Period (P. Brooklyn 47.218.49)." Dissertation, New York University, 2002. 124-125). The most literal meaning of the term is "to pour (out)," made clear by its frequent occurrence in texts accompanying libation scenes (Peter Dils, "Wine for Pouring and Purification in Ancient Egypt." *Ritual and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East*. Ed. Jan Quaegebeur. Leuven: Peeters, 1993. 114, 116, 119). Thus, I have chosen to render this circumstantial *sdm.n.f.* literally as "I have poured out," although the exact sense of the verb in this spell remains elusive. Perhaps it is closest to Roccati's suggestion, "I have wet" or "I have drenched," – a reading also favored by Fischer-Elfert (*Altägyptische Zaubersprüche*, 54) – particularly if we view the clay as metaphorical, magical sweat "which comes out under the armpit of Selqet." The translation "overflowed" is also a possibility, as evident in the Crossword Hymn to Mut, which employs similar vocabulary and imagery: *mw.s fdt.s ttf.ti idbwy* "her water and her sweat overflows the two banks." (BM 194, horizontal line 33: Lana Troy, "Mut Enthroned." *Essays on Ancient Egypt in honour of Herman te Velde*. Ed. Jacobus van Dijk. Groningen: Styx, 1997. 304, though correct her transliteration *ttf* to *ttf*). I thank Professor Richard Jasnow for discussing this term with me, providing references, and suggesting the possibility of regarding the clay as sweat.

⁶⁰⁶ *WB II*: 187, II,b, following the translation of Borghouts (*Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*. Leiden: Brill, 1978, 91 and n.311), where he identifies the *mdz(w)t* as, "The magical books the snake allegedly uses." Roccati, following the suggestion of Georges Posener, translates *mdz(w)t* as "chisels," taking the word as a metaphor for the teeth of the snake (Roccati, *Papiro Ieratico*, 26 n.c). Osing, with additional references, also favors the metaphorical translation "chisels" ("Zu einigen magischen Texten," 473 and 474 n.b), as does Eschweiler (Peter Eschweiler, *Bildzauber im alten Ägypten: Die Verwendung von Bildern und Gegenständen in magischen Handlungen nach den Texten des Mittleren und Neuen Reiches*. Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1994. 221-222) and Fischer-Elfert (*Altägyptische Zaubersprüche*, 54, 140). However, the absence of a crucible or chisel determinative, which would better confirm that *mdz(w)t* "chisels" was intended (Peter A. Piccione, "The *mdz.t*, "Peg", in Ancient Egyptian." *Serapis* 7 (1981-1982) 76), together with the fact that the earliest attestation of "chisel" being written with the bookroll sign is the Book of the Dead (*WB II*: 188), makes this interpretation difficult.

⁶⁰⁷ For *hntt* as "armpit," rather than "shoulder," see Ricardo A. Caminos, ed. and trans., *Literary Fragments in the Hieratic Script*. Oxford: University Press for the Griffith Institute, 1956. 15 n.1. There may also be sound play here with *hddt/hddt*, a protective scorpion goddess known as early as the Coffin Texts who was often associated, or even merged, with Isis: *WB III*: 206, 215; Kákosy, *Egyptian Healing Statues in Three Museums in Italy*, 17-18; Dimitri Meeks, "Hededet." *LÄ II*: 1076-1078; Jean-Claude Goyon, "Isis-scorpion et Isis au scorpion." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 78 (1978) 439-457. I thank Professor Richard Jasnow for this suggestion.

⁶⁰⁸ There is probably a play here on the sound *sin*, as it also occurs in the verb "to rub" (*WB III*: 425-426), a term commonly employed in magico-medical texts. The mention of the practitioner's finger evokes an image of him grasping and/or rubbing the clay figure.

⁶⁰⁹ Borghouts translates, "The clay is its obstruction" (*Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 91) using a nominal form of the verb *hn*, which the *Wörterbuch* lists as "to obstruct" (the way with cloth)? (*WB III*: 100, 13) based on its use in the Tale of the Eloquent Peasant. Osing and Fischer-Elfert similarly translate the term as "obstructed" ("Zu einigen magischen

15) Where then?⁶¹⁰ (2x) Look, they are here in their proper place. Do not⁶¹¹ attack a bone, do not split

16) a vessel⁶¹² until you have reached⁶¹³ the prosperity of my mouth/spell.”
Words spoken over a clay figure which has been encircled,⁶¹⁴ a knife
therein it, a measure⁶¹⁵ [of cloth], dbit-plant⁶¹⁶ or halfa grass.⁶¹⁷

Texten, 473 and 474 n.c; *Altägyptische Zaubersprüche*, 54). More certain translations for the verb *hn*, however, are “to supply,” “to protect,” and “to command” (*WB* III: 101, A-C). While the “obstruction” translation is appealing if we envision the clay figure as a barrier to the snake’s venomous bite, one of the more certain translations seems fitting in this context, as *hn* is rendered in parallel with the preceding *s3* “protection.” Thus, I have chosen “guard.” Roccati’s “container,” i.e. the box in which the magical papyri were kept, seems less plausible, especially as that definition for the word is attested from Dynasty 19 onwards. Also note that Roccati’s hieroglyphic transcription of the word is incorrect, as the determinative should be the “clump of papyrus with buds bent down” (Georg Möller, *Hieratische Paläographie. Die ägyptische Buchschrift in ihrer Entwicklung von der 5. Dynastie bis zur römischen Kaiserzeit*. Osnabrück: Zeller, 1965. I: 278; Gardiner Sign-list M15) and not “the receptacle of some kind” (Möller I: 590; Gardiner Sign-list V36). This determinative is, however, doubtless an error on the scribe’s part, as the word *hn* written with the “clump of papyrus” determinative, meaning “marsh plant” (*WB* III: 100), would not make sense in this context.

⁶¹⁰ For the particle *tr* followed by the interrogative *tn*: *WB* V: 317,II;*WB* V: 373; Alan H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*. Third Edition, Revised. Oxford: Griffith Institute/Ashmolean Museum, 1994. §256; §491,3; §503.

⁶¹¹ The negative imperative of *iml*: Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, §340.

⁶¹² The word *mt* “vessel” is determined with its usual piece of flesh sign (Möller I: 178, with a close parallel in P. Bulaq 18; Gardiner Sign-list F51; *WB* II: 167) and not the “unusual” canal determinative (Möller I: 324, Gardiner Sign-list N23), as suggested with a query in Roccati’s transcription and noted on p.27 n.h. For the meaning of *mt(w)* as “vessel,” with no distinction made between “artery,” “vein,” “tendon,” or “nerve,” see Kent R. Weeks, “Medicine, Surgery, and Public Health in Ancient Egypt.” *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Ed. Jack M. Sasson. New York: Scribner, 1995. III: 1790.

⁶¹³ *r* + *s4mt.f*, following the suggestion of Roccati, *Papitro Ieratico*, 27 n.h; Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, §401, 407.

⁶¹⁴ Taking *šny* as a stative (Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, §309-311, 317; James E. Hoch, *Middle Egyptian Grammar*. Mississauga: Benben Publications, 1997. §82-87) and using *šn*’s literal meaning, “to encircle” (*WB* IV: 489-490). An alternate translation is “which has been conjured,” reading *šny* as a stative form of the verb *šni* “to conjure” (*WB* IV: 496). Both verbs are commonly found in magico-medical texts, but without a determinative, it is difficult to decide which of the two was intended in this spell. This is not a major obstacle to our understanding of the text, however, as both verbs evoke the notion “to enchant” (Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 40-41, 43, 50, 57 n.266, 143).

⁶¹⁵ *š3rt* is not attested in the *Wörterbuch*. Hannig reconstructs its determinative as the herb (Gardiner Sign-list M2) and translates the term as “Bündel” (*Pflanzen*): *Grosses Handwörterbuch*, 804. His translation, however, comes from a direct association of *š3rt* with the *dbit* and *nb* later in the column, but this ignores the lacuna, quail chick, cloth determinative, and plural strokes which stand between *š3rt* and *dbit*. Given the gap

3.2.1.3 Commentary

This spell from P. Turin 54003 is part of a continuous line of magical texts intended to repel snakes and scorpions with a combination of spoken words and action. These spells are the oldest in Egyptian magical practice, beginning with the Pyramid Texts⁶¹⁸ or perhaps even earlier oral practice.⁶¹⁹ Borghouts calls the Turin papyrus “a clear example of where the magician gets his working material from: a number [of spells] seem to have been borrowed from a statue ritual, part of which also occurs in the Coffin Texts.”⁶²⁰ Thus, by the time of the Middle Kingdom, spells like these were

between the latter two words, a close association of *šrt* with the plants should not be made, although “bundle” is not an altogether problematic translation. Other discussions of the term *šrt* have linked it to the word *šrw*, a word also absent from the *Wörterbuch*, but attested in the Hekanakht papyri. T.G.H. James translates *šrw* “bundles” because it is followed by the word for flax, *mḥw*: (*The Hekanakhte Papers and Other Early Middle Kingdom Documents*. Publications of the Metropolitan Museum of Art Egyptian Expedition v.19. New York, 1962. 58). James also suggests that *šrt* may be from the same root as *šrt*, a late term for clothing and bindings (*WB* IV: 524,8). In his recent edition of the Hekanakht papyri, James P. Allen translates *šrw* as a “sheaf” of flax, and links it with the later term *šzi* “which seems to denote a single stalk,” although he does not address any links it might have with *šrt* (*The Hekanakht Papyri*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2002. 172 and n.148, 149). Obviously, there remains some uncertainty about the origins of the term *šrt* as written in the Turin papyrus, which looks to be a feminine noun ending in *-t*. The term also appears to denote a quantity, likely of some kind of woven material, given that the word which originally followed it was determined with the cloth sign. Therefore, presuming a relationship with the term *šrw* used for a quantity (of flax), the general term “measure” is the translation employed here.

⁶¹⁶ *ḏbit* is an unknown type of plant that features in several magico-medical texts: *WB* V: 435; Hildegard von Deines and Hermann Grapow, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Drogennamen. Grundriss der Medizin der Alten Ägypter VI*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1959. 576; Naoko Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind: Papyrus Berlin 3027*. Berlin: Achet Verlag, 2003. Spell H. VII, 1-3. 28, 63.

⁶¹⁷ For *nb* as “halfa grass” see Wolfgang Helck, “Gräser.” *LÄ* II: 879; Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri*, 48 and n. 141. Note that plants also figure prominently in Ugaritic anti-snake texts: Baruch A. Levine and Jean-Michel de Tarragon, “‘Shaphshu Cries Out in Heaven’: Dealing with Snake-Bites at Ugarit (KTU 1.100, 1.107).” *Revue Biblique* 95 (1988) 481-518.

⁶¹⁸ “Magic.” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Donald B. Redford. New York: Oxford UP, 2001. II: 326.

⁶¹⁹ John Baines, “Society, Morality, and Religious Practice.” *Religion in Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Byron E. Shafer. London: Routledge, 1991. 165-166.

⁶²⁰ Borghouts, “Lexicographical Aspects,” 157.

employed to protect the living and the dead, royals as well as non-royals. Anti-snake and scorpion spells remain in the corpus of magico-medical texts of the New Kingdom,⁶²¹ and Late Period and Ptolemaic magical stelae and statues like the Socle Béhague also bear spells to repel stinging creatures, including selections from the Pyramid Text corpus.⁶²² Given the persistence of these spells, it is not at all problematic to link the Middle Kingdom Turin text with magical figurines of New Kingdom to Late Period date, as concerns about venomous creatures were ever-present, and the utterances and rituals used to combat them long-lived.

Our Turin spell was designed to be read by a practitioner who would follow its directions in the presence of the person and/or space needing protection.⁶²³ After a general title introducing the purpose of the spell, it begins with a deliberate confrontation between the practitioner and the snake, a common technique in Egyptian magic.⁶²⁴ The magician/physician directly addresses the snake in line 13, announcing that he is repelling its (“your”) striking power and pouring out its magical books using *sin pw n 3st pr hr hꜣtt nt srkt*. It is this phrase that is crucial for our understanding of the object that the magical practitioner manipulates while reciting the spell.

The *sin* of this spell has previously been rendered as simply the substance “clay.”⁶²⁵ However, scholars have not thoroughly investigated

⁶²¹ Borghouts, “Lexicographical Aspects,” 164; *ibid.* “The Edition of Magical Papyri in Turin: a Progress Report.” *La Magia in Egitto ai tempi dei faraoni: atti, convegno internazionale di studi, Milano, 29-31 ottobre 1985*. Eds. Alessandro Roccati and Alberto Silotti. Italy: Rassegna internazionale di cinematografia archeologica: Arte e natura libri, 1987. 263.

⁶²² i.e. Stele BM 190 and Stele Ny Carlsberg Æ.I.N. 974: Borghouts, “Lexicographical Studies,” 156 and 170.

⁶²³ For the magical duties of priests and other temple staff, see Joachim F. Quack, “La magie au temple.” *La magie en Egypte. Actes du colloque organize par le Musée du Louvre les 29 et 30 septembre 2000*. Paris: Louvre, 2002. 41-68; David Frankfurter, “Curses, Blessings, and Ritual Authority: Egyptian Magic in Comparative Perspective.” *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 5 (2006) 162-167. An example of a spell to protect a space as well as the people within it is O. Gardiner 363. This spell was to be recited over four cobras of clay (*sin*) placed in the corners of a bedroom in order to protect the inhabitants from the restless dead, who were thought to bring nightmares: Robert K. Ritner, “O. Gardiner 363: A Spell Against Night Terrors.” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 27 (1990) 25-41; Kasia Szpakowska. *Behind Closed Eyes: Dreams and Nightmares in Ancient Egypt*. Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2003. 170-171. A related spell to protect a house is P. Chester Beatty VIII [8] vs. 1,1-2, 4: Borghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 10-11; Szpakowska, “Playing With Fire,” 121.

⁶²⁴ Adhémar Massart, “The Egyptian Geneva Papyrus MAH 15274.” *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 15 (1957) 184; Borghouts, “Witchcraft, Magic, and Divination in Ancient Egypt,” 1778.

⁶²⁵ Roccati, *Papiro Ieratico*, 26; Borghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 91, although in

just what type of clay or clay object *sin* denotes.⁶²⁶ If this *sin n 3st* is a clay object, we must inquire whether such objects can be seen in the archaeological record. Such an investigation will be undertaken here.

First, we should note that the presence of the goddess Isis is not surprising in this genre of text. Myth and magic were completely entwined in Egyptian thought, and allusions to Isis as healer are abundant in magico-medical spells.⁶²⁷ In fact, they are almost to be expected. She is a dominant figure in these spells thanks to her mythological role as the mother of Horus, who was bitten by either a snake or scorpion (depending on the myth) during childhood and needed to be cured before cosmic chaos could ensue.⁶²⁸ Isis in her capacity as healer is often called “great of magic” (*wrt ḥk3w*),⁶²⁹ “effective one” (*3ḥt*)⁶³⁰ – sometimes translated “enchantress” or “magician” – or “one effective of words” (*3ḥw(t) mdw*),⁶³¹ in reference to the magical speeches and techniques she uses to protect her son.⁶³² However, we must also note that the Turin spell above does not call for the practitioner to act as Isis, as in numerous other healing spells,⁶³³ but instead for him to speak over a substance or object described as “this clay of Isis, which comes out under the armpit of Selqet.” It has been lamented that,

his note 312, he suggests that “perhaps a clay model is used.”; Osing, 473; Eschweiler, 221; Fischer-Elfert, *Altägyptische Zaubersprüche*, 54, 140.

⁶²⁶ Jørgen Podemann Sørensen categorizes the *sin* as “a piece of clay” and as a “magical instrument” which “becomes efficacious when the formula appoints it the clay of Isis,” but does not appear to regard the clay as taking a particular form: “The Argument in Ancient Egyptian Magical Formulae.” *Acta Orientalia* 45 (1984) 12.

⁶²⁷ Adolf Klasens, *A Magical Statue Base (Socle Béhague) in the Museum of Antiquities at Leiden*. Leiden: Brill, 1952. passim; Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, passim; Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri*, 8-9, 12-18, 28-30, 47-48, 85-86.

⁶²⁸ Klasens, *A Magical Statue Base*, 81-82.

⁶²⁹ Christian Leitz, ed. *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*. Leuven and Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2002. I: 71.

⁶³⁰ Leitz, ed. *Lexikon*, I: 27.

⁶³¹ Leitz, ed. *Lexikon*, I: 32.

⁶³² e.g. Metternich Stela 59: Klasens, *A Magical Statue Base*, 16-16, 52-53, 77.

⁶³³ e.g. P. Leiden I 348, vs. 11, 7-8; Borghouts, *The Magical Texts of P. Leiden I 348*, 31, pls. 15 and 32; Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind (P. Berlin 3027) Spell D II, 6-10; Yamazaki, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, 16-17; Metternich Stela 48: Klasens, *A Magical Statue Base*, 9, 52, 67.

“Die mythologischen Anspielungen auf Isis und Selqet sind uns leider nicht ganz verständlich,”⁶³⁴ and so this commentary aims to tease out the role of these two goddesses in the spell, while also investigating the type of object required.

We have already noted above that “this clay of Isis which comes out under the armpit of Selqet” might refer to magical, divine sweat, with which the serpent is repelled.⁶³⁵ On another level, this phrase likely refers to Isis in her astronomical version.⁶³⁶ László Kákosy has highlighted the astral components of another group of magical objects designed to repel venomous creatures, the Horus *cippi*, observing that, “The war against the serpents was waged on two levels. They had to be made harmless not only on the earth...but in the heavenly spheres too.”⁶³⁷ Therefore, we should not be surprised to find an astral component in this Turin anti-snake spell.

The astronomical version of “this clay of Isis which comes out under the arm of Selqet” can be seen in Egyptian depictions of the northern sky. For example, the ceiling of the tomb of Senenmut (TT 353) shows the constellation “Selqet” at top center, with the constellation “Isis” underneath her and slightly to the right, i.e. beneath her armpit.⁶³⁸ Both constellation-goddesses are shown in their anthropomorphic forms of standing females and are labeled with the hieroglyphic rendering of their names above their heads.

Additionally, Isis is often assimilated with the decan Sopdet or Sothis (our Sirius), who is represented on Egyptian astronomical ceilings in the southern sky, directly opposite Selqet.⁶³⁹ She is depicted as a goddess standing in a barque and, when merged with Isis, her name is written above her head as “Isis Sopdet,” as on the ceiling of TT 353.⁶⁴⁰ Thus, the phrase

⁶³⁴ Fischer-Elfert, *Altägyptische Zaubersprüche*, 140.

⁶³⁵ p.137 n.605.

⁶³⁶ I am grateful to Professor Betsy Bryan for bringing this interpretation to my attention.

⁶³⁷ Kákosy, *Egyptian Healing Statues in Three Museums in Italy*, 20.

⁶³⁸ The astronomical ceiling of TT353 is the oldest representation of the northern constellations: Otto Neugebauer and Richard A. Parker, *Egyptian Astronomical Texts*. London: L. Humphries for Brown University Press, 1960-1969. III,1: 11, 183 and Fig. 2; Peter F. Dorman, *The Monuments of Senenmut: Problems in Historical Methodology*. London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 1985. 145-146; Marshall Clagett, *Ancient Egyptian Science. Vol. II: Calendars, Clocks, and Astronomy*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1995. 111.

⁶³⁹ Neugebauer and Parker, *Egyptian Astronomical Texts*, III,1: 115, 199, 201; III,2: Pls. 3, 5; J. Gwyn Griffiths, “Isis.” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Donald B. Redford. New York: Oxford UP, 2001. II: 189.

⁶⁴⁰ Clagett, *Ancient Egyptian Science*, Vol. II, 113-114.

used in this Turin magical spell can be taken as a reference to Isis in her astral manifestation(s), which in the ritual was to be rendered as a clay figure. We can further note that calls to deities in their astral forms were common in Mesopotamian magico-medical healing spells, which could also be coupled with the fashioning of protective figurines.⁶⁴¹

Isis's astral role in the Turin anti-venom spell is apt given the nature of the threat. As suggested in the previous chapter, ceramic female figurines like those from the Mut Precinct appear to have been used in situations not unlike the execration figures connected with the rite of "Breaking the Red Vessels," whose destruction was "aimed at the destruction of evil forces lurking beyond the borders of the cosmos."⁶⁴² Borghouts has noted that the use of the passive participle *h3b(w)* in the Turin spell suggests that the snake to whom the spell is addressed was sent on purpose,⁶⁴³ and notes that the presence of snakes was thought to have been "due to the influence of evil-willing spirits, the restless deceased,"⁶⁴⁴ that is, forces beyond the terrestrial realm. Although the sender of the snake is not explicitly stated in the Turin spell, a cosmic or otherworldly origin for the snake helps to explain why a figure of a healing goddess in her heavenly form was needed to combat its venomous strike. Only a deity familiar with the evil forces of the both the terrestrial world and the beyond would be able to combat the snake with her knowledge and her magical skill. Isis is, therefore, one of the most fitting goddesses to be conjured in this spell to repel stinging animals.⁶⁴⁵

The *sin* of this spell therefore bears several layers of meaning. Literally, it refers to the material clay. Metaphorically, the clay is the sweat of Selqet, which helps to repel the snake. Functionally, the *sin* refers to a clay object manipulated in the ritual. That *sin n 3st* refers to more than just the material clay, but to a representation of the celestial and healing goddess, Isis, is the interpretation favored here. This meaning can also be inferred from a close look at the grammar of the spell.

First, *sin* does not appear in the genitival phrase a [blank] of *sin*, the usual way that the term is employed in magico-medical texts when it

⁶⁴¹ Reiner, "Magic Figurines, Amulets and Talismans," 33-36.

⁶⁴² Van Dijk, "Zerbrechen der roten Töpfe." *LÄ* IV: 1393.

⁶⁴³ Borghouts, "Lexicographical Studies," 158 and n.24: correct p.Turin CG54009 to 54003.

⁶⁴⁴ Borghouts, "Lexicographical Studies," 158.

⁶⁴⁵ Recall that in Hour 7 of the Amduat, Isis stands at the front of the solar barque and uses her magic to render the serpent Apophis senseless: Erik Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the Many*. Trans. John Baines. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1982. 209; Hornung, *The Ancient Egyptian Books of the Afterlife*. Trans. David Lorton. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1999. 38-39.

means simply the material clay.⁶⁴⁶ Instead, it appears in the phrase *sin pw*, “this clay.” *sin*’s qualification with the demonstrative adjective *pw*⁶⁴⁷ suggests that *sin* is a specific entity made from clay. Therefore, these words are rendered above as “this clay [figure],” in order to highlight the fact that the *sin* likely refers to a female figurine of clay brandished by the practitioner in the ritual.

Further evidence for reading *sin* as a clay figure are the directives at the end of the text, which specify that the spell is to be recited over *sin* in which a knife is enclosed and which is either mixed with or wrapped in vegetal material and cloth. Given the abundance of magical texts calling for objects of *sin*, it is entirely possible that these actions are to be taken with clay that has been formed into a specific shape, here of “Isis,” a female. In addition, the vegetal material *dbit* or *nb* and the cloth that are prescribed could be either pressed into a wet clay figure, or tied around a baked clay one. As the term *sin* can denote either raw or baked clay, the exact nature of the clay figure prescribed in this spell must remain ambiguous, although we can say for certain that the object was subjected to both severing and treatment with vegetal and woven elements just before or during the recitation of the spell. We might also recall from Chapter 2 that some Type 1 female figurines found at Gebel Zeit were wrapped in linen prior to their deposition, perhaps indicating their use in a similar magical ritual.

Again, it is asserted here that the word *sin* in this spell is not describing merely the material clay, but also a figure fashioned from clay. As the spell asks the practitioner to speak “over” (*hr*) the clay object, and to enclose a knife in it, we can imagine it was not of colossal or very large proportions, but a smaller, more manageable size. The object can in this case be understood as a portable figurine of a female, which we know from the Ramsseum tomb could be part of a magician/physician’s kit.⁶⁴⁸

⁶⁴⁶ e.g. *bnnt nt sin* “balls of clay” in P. Leiden I 348 rt. 6,3; Borghouts, *P. Leiden I 348*, 20, pls. 6 and 23; *nm n sin* “dwarf of clay” in P. Leiden I 348 vs. 12,6; Borghouts, *P. Leiden I 348*, 29, pls. 14 and 31; *swht n sin* “egg of clay” in BM EA 10042 (Harris Magical Papyrus) VI, 12; Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri*, 40 and pl. 17, to name just a few. For more on these spells, see section 3.3 below.

⁶⁴⁷ Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, §110.

⁶⁴⁸ See above, section 2.4. For a photograph of the nude wooden female figure with a lion head or mask and holding bronze snakes which was found in the tomb (Manchester Museum 1790), see Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition (2006) 57 fig. 27. Pinch interprets the figure as a representation of the goddess Beset, while the Manchester Museum website states more generally that, “This figure probably represents a protective goddess.”: <<http://emu.man.ac.uk/mmcustom/Display.php?irn=103798&QueryPage=mmcustom/narratives/index.php>>. Its size is comparable to that of complete ceramic

We can observe that several scholars have tentatively identified the *sin* of this Turin spell with a modeled object of clay. Joris Borghouts, in a note accompanying a translation of the spell, inquires whether a clay model was being referenced in the text, although he links the proposed object with the goddess Selqet rather than Isis, and thus suggests that a scorpion of clay might be indicated.⁶⁴⁹ He also notes that the “they” of column 15 refers to “the clay object and the finger,” making clear his interpretation of the word *sin* as a clay figure.⁶⁵⁰

In addition, Geraldine Pinch has suggested that the ‘woman’s statue of clay’ mentioned in “a papyrus of the late second millennium BC” – in fact the Leiden text to be discussed below – might refer “to a type of nude female figurine which was used as a fertility charm.”⁶⁵¹ Pinch here links the image called for in the Leiden spell with the types of female figurine studied in *Votive Offerings to Hathor*, which we have seen are similar to the female figures from the Mut Precinct. Pinch also notes that a “woman’s figurine of Isis is also mentioned in an anti-venom spell.”⁶⁵² This is presumably the Turin text under study here, although Pinch does not include a reference to the individual spell.

In the latter instance, Pinch does not pursue the identification of known ceramic female figurines with the apotropaic object mentioned in the anti-venom spell. Instead, she continues to see extant nude female figurines as primarily concerned with childbearing and child rearing, and thus dismisses a broader healing quality for such figures by noting that “[s]corpion bite sometimes seems to be used as a metaphor for all the mysterious and sudden afflictions of early childhood so this [clay figure of Isis] may still be in the sphere of fertility.”⁶⁵³

One can note, however, that Pinch’s discussion of the anti-venom spell featuring a figurine of Isis does not appear in the revised, second

female figurines (approximately 20 cm tall), making it portable and manipulable.

⁶⁴⁹ Borghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 91 n.312: “Selqis is a scorpion goddess herself. Perhaps a clay model is used, as in no. 112 (*sic*).” Borghouts is actually referring to the spell no. 113 in his publication, from P. Chester Beatty VII [18] rt. 7,5-7, in which the practitioner refers to “the scorpion which I have made of clay (*t3 whʿt iri.n.i m sin*).”

⁶⁵⁰ Borghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 91 n.313.

⁶⁵¹ Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt* (1994) 99-100; *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition (2006) 100.

⁶⁵² *Magic in Ancient Egypt* (1994) 100.

⁶⁵³ Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt* (1994) 100.

edition of her book. In its place, Pinch has inserted a correlation between spells to alleviate stomachaches, such as the Leiden example, and spells to relieve labor pains, remarking that, “The laying of a hand on the belly is recommended in both cases, so a type of object related to childbirth might well appear in a spell for ordinary stomach-ache.”⁶⁵⁴ Here, she does appear to identify figurines of nude females as possible components of magical healing rites, while still maintaining her stance that the figurines’ “main purpose was to ensure a successful sex life, culminating in the birth of healthy children.”⁶⁵⁵

Pinch’s tentative identification is nevertheless the closest that any scholar has come to linking the objects of clay named in the Turin and Leiden spells with archaeologically attested figurines. Given the new evidence for deliberately broken and red-painted (i.e. magical) ceramic female figurines from the Mut Precinct, a number of which are roughly contemporary with the papyri on which these spells were written, the correlation between extant female figures and the clay figurines mentioned in the texts will be pursued even further.

While Pinch opts to keep pottery female figurines firmly in the realm of women and procreation rather than extending her understanding of the objects to allow for a divine aspect, it is put forth here that female figures like the Mut Precinct types were the very types of objects charged with the more general medical concerns specified in the Turin and Leiden texts. As stated in Chapter 2, I understand the Egyptian notion of fertility much more broadly than does Pinch, and believe that ceramic nude female figurines were thought to protect healthy, and therefore fertile, men and women alike through their use as temporary manifestations of deities in magico-medical rituals.

As we take a closer look at the possible divine aspects of ceramic female figurines, we should bear in mind that it is not unusual in Egyptian mythology for deities to fall ill or be injured.⁶⁵⁶ Therefore, while it might at first seem to go against Egyptian beliefs to employ a “clay figure of Isis” in a ritual designed to absorb an evil force or which required breaking or otherwise damaging the image, calling upon the goddess in a private magical spell was in fact quite normal. However, we would not expect a

⁶⁵⁴ *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition (2006) 100-101.

⁶⁵⁵ Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition (2006) 100.

⁶⁵⁶ i.e. The Socle Béahgue and related spells: Klasens, *A Magical Statue Base*, 5, 52-63.

cult statue⁶⁵⁷ of a deity to be used in a private magical spell. A generic image made of organic material that could embody Isis for just the short duration of the healing ritual would be more apt. Such an image is in fact explicitly called for in the Leiden text to be discussed below, and further proof for the use of portable objects of organic material in magico-medical rites can be found in several New Kingdom magical spells to prevent snakebites, which state that the words are to be recited over such objects as a ‘female figure of Isis in firewood’ (*rpyt 3st m ht n sdt*),⁶⁵⁸ a firewood image of Selqet, or wooden images of the gods Atum, Horus, and Sia.⁶⁵⁹ The wooden images of the latter spell were supposed to be “placed at the neck of the man who is the patient” and could be interpreted as small objects like figurines or amulets. Similarly, the wooden images of Isis and Selqet were also likely small objects that the practitioner could carry with him. Being made of wood, however, objects like these are less likely to survive in the archaeological record, whereas fired clay small objects like the Mut Precinct figures are more resilient, and are thus available to us as remnants of magical rites. The wooden images of deities mentioned in the British Museum papyrus thus represent further examples of magical vehicles made from organic materials used to combat snakes, and we need not envision them as elaborate or even canonical renderings of the named deities. It is therefore proposed here that the *sin n 3st* utilized by the magician in conjunction with the Turin anti-snake spell be identified with ceramic female figurines exhibiting deliberate breakage and red paint like the Mut Precinct examples.

As already stated, these clay images are unlikely to represent Isis in her cult statue form. If the objects detailed in the Turin and Leiden spells are indeed to be identified with figurines like the Mut Precinct types, we see that such objects take the form of generic nude females, their sex being made explicit through the modeling of their long hair/wigs, breasts, wide hips, and/or incised or recessed pubic triangles.⁶⁶⁰

⁶⁵⁷ See Gay Robins, “Cult Statues in Ancient Egypt.” *Cult Image and Divine Representation in the Ancient Near East*. Ed. Neal H. Walls. Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2005. 1-12, for an excellent discussion of these types of objects.

⁶⁵⁸ BM EA 9997 + 10309, V,3: Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri*, 8-11.

⁶⁵⁹ BM EA 9997 + 10309, VI,14-17: Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri*, 12-18. These New Kingdom spells have the same format as the Turin spell, and have parallels on Late Period magical statues such as the Socle Béhague.

⁶⁶⁰ Gay Robins has already noted the generic form of female figurines, although, following Pinch, she regards them as having a votive ‘fertility figurine’ function: *The Art of Ancient Egypt*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1997. 114.

Further inquiry into the generic nature of ceramic female figurines may enable us to nuance a statement made by Pinch regarding the apparent dearth of pottery figures of Isis in the archaeological record. Pinch suggests that pottery figures of Isis are “virtually unknown” from the time of the Leiden papyrus (i.e. the New Kingdom) because “such figurines were destroyed as soon as the infliction had been transferred into them...,” or because “a divine figurine would have been buried or dedicated in a temple after the rite.”⁶⁶¹ Pinch is surely referring here to ceramic images of the Isis in her typical form of a standing or enthroned woman with a horned sundisk or throne hieroglyph atop her head, images which are, indeed, lacking prior to the Graeco-Roman period.⁶⁶² However, I suggest that ceramic female figures like the Mut Precinct examples *are* the physical remains of ceramic figures of Isis like those called for in the spells, even though they do not represent the goddess in what Egyptologists consider to be her canonical form. This leads us to inquire whether the form of a generic female was a possible mode of representation for Isis during the pharaonic period.

One piece of evidence that argues in favor of such an iconographic tradition for Isis is a late Middle Kingdom copper statuette now in Berlin.⁶⁶³ This 12.2-cm high statuette depicts Isis as a woman dressed in contemporary garb and wig, without any divine insignia.⁶⁶⁴ She is shown in the squatting nursing pose holding the child Horus to her left breast, and the accompanying inscription preserves part of a speech by Isis and Horus relating their protective function, a text similar to those found on apotropaic

⁶⁶¹ Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt* (1994) 99; *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition (2006) 100.

⁶⁶² For Graeco-Roman examples of Isis in baked clay, see e.g. Jutta Fischer, *Griechisch-Römische Terrakotten aus Ägypten*. Tübingen: Ernst Wasmuth, 1994. 341-357, cat. 844-894, Taf. 89-93; Mette Fjeldhagen, *Graeco-Roman Terracottas from Egypt: Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek*. Copenhagen: Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, 1995. 58-70, cat. 35-49; László Török, *Hellenistic and Roman Terracottas from Egypt*. Rome: “L’Erma” di Bretschneider, 1995. 86-89, cat. 104-107, pls. LV-LVII.

⁶⁶³ Berlin 14078: Marsha Hill, ed. with Deborah Schorsch, technical editor. *Gifts for the Gods: Images from Egyptian Temples*. New Haven and London: Metropolitan Museum of Art/Yale University Press, 2007. Cat. no. 3: 11 fig. 7, 12-13, 201; James F. Romano, “A Statuette of a Royal Mother and Child in The Brooklyn Museum.” *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 48 (1992) 138-142 and Tafel 30b.

⁶⁶⁴ Marsha Hill, “Charting Metal Statuary: The Archaic Period through the Pre-Thutmoside New Kingdom (ca. 3100-1479 B.C.).” *Gifts for the Gods: Images from Egyptian Temples*. Ed. Marsha Hill, with Deborah Schorsch, technical editor. Metropolitan Museum of Art/Yale University Press, 2007. 11 fig. 7 and 201; Romano, “A Statuette of a Royal Mother and Child,” 138-139.

ivory wands of similar date.⁶⁶⁵ This Middle Kingdom statuette, which predates the earliest statues of Isis suckling Horus in the better-known enthroned position by nearly a millennium,⁶⁶⁶ forces us to reevaluate the possibilities for representations of Isis during the pharaonic period and allow for the fact that goddesses could be represented more generically than previously thought. As Marsha Hill has remarked, it is possible “that the copper statuette of Isis belongs to a representational tradition of the goddesses that is now lost to us.”⁶⁶⁷

Baked clay images of females such as those found at the Mut Precinct may be further examples of this tradition of Isis depicted as generic female. It is apt to recall here that some ceramic female figurines also represent women in a nursing pose,⁶⁶⁸ even though this attitude is not attested among the Mut Precinct corpus. While an association with Isis is difficult to prove without inscriptional evidence directly on the clay figures, we must admit that the religious possibilities inherent in a generic, anepigraphic image of a female may have been more obvious to the ancient users than to us. What seems clear is that both the copper statuette and the clay objects named in the Turin and Leiden spells served related apotropaic purposes: they were embodiments of Isis as a protective and healing goddess and were activated by the recitation of spells, whether such texts were inscribed directly on the piece, as in the case of the Berlin statuette, or documented separately in magico-medical compendia.

Related to the notion of a generic image of a female being a possible representational mode for the goddess Isis is the idea that such general imagery was utilized in magico-medical contexts precisely because of its inherent flexibility. Uninscribed female figures such as those from the Mut Precinct, which we have seen were produced *en masse* to standardized forms, could have served as any one of the numerous goddesses summoned in magico-medical spells (Isis, Mut, Selqet, etc.) depending on the nature of the threat and/or the locale where the rite was being performed.⁶⁶⁹ A second, related benefit of such imagery may be the protection of the goddess summoned. The figurines were probably also fashioned as generic

⁶⁶⁵ Hill, “Charting Metal Statuary,” 12; Romano, “A Statuette of a Royal Mother and Child,” 138-139.

⁶⁶⁶ Hill, “Charting Metal Statuary,” 12; Romano, “A Statuette of a Royal Mother and Child,” 140.

⁶⁶⁷ Hill, “Charting Metal Statuary,” 13.

⁶⁶⁸ e.g. British Museum EA 23434; UC 8654; UC 24513; UC 45796; UC 45799.

⁶⁶⁹ For remarks concerning the flexibility of Egyptian imagery, especially with respect to small, uninscribed objects, see Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 285, 328-329.

females in order to protect the deity invoked in the spell from the very affliction that she was being asked to prevent. It is suggested, then, that ceramic female figurines needed for the spells like the Turin text above took the form of generic females, and were envisioned as Isis only at the moment of the rite. That is, at the moment in which the practitioner aimed to repel the snake by producing and manipulating the figurine and uttering the phrase “with this clay [figure] of Isis,” the object magically became the healing goddess Isis, but only for the brief duration of the spell. At the moment when the figurine was severed or broken, it was likely no longer considered to be an active image of Isis, but merely a receptacle of the evil it had just repelled, and, as been argued above, therefore needed to be snapped and discarded.

This returns us to Pinch’s remark on the apparent dearth of clay images of Isis in the archaeological record. Evidence from the Mut Precinct and elsewhere confirms that ceramic figurines of females, which could have embodied Isis when utilized in conjunction with spells like the Turin text above, were disposed of within a temple precinct. Therefore, while Pinch is correct to suggest that ceramic figures of Isis were likely destroyed and/or disposed of in a temple environment at the conclusion of a magical rite, she is unable to fully connect existing generic figurines of females to the figures of Isis prescribed in the Turin and Leiden texts, preventing her from realizing that more ceramic images of Isis may appear in the archaeological record than it seems at first glance.

3.2.2 *P. Leiden I 348 rt. 12,2-12,4*

The second spell to be analyzed in detail also calls for a female image of Isis in clay, and in this instance, the object is more clearly rendered as such in the Egyptian, being called a *rpyt nt sint* and a *rpyt ʔst*. These phrases likely refer to the same type of magical vehicle called for in the Turin spell above.

The spell is one of many included in Papyrus Leiden I 348. The papyrus was first published in the mid-19th century,⁶⁷⁰ but the fullest and most recent treatment of its magical spells is the doctoral thesis of Joris F. Borghouts, published as *The Magical Texts of Papyrus Leiden I 348* in 1971. Supposedly found in Memphis, the papyrus was acquired by the Nederlandsche Museum van Oudheden te Leiden in 1826. Written in the Hieratic script by multiple hands, the papyrus has been dated by Georg Möller to the 19th Dynasty on the basis of the two main scribes’ hands,

⁶⁷⁰ Willem Pleyte, *Étude sur un rouleau magique du Musée de Leide: Traduction analytique et commentée du Pap. 348 Revers*. Leiden: Brill, 1866.

some of whose signs Möller used in his paleography.⁶⁷¹ The language of the text is Middle Egyptian with numerous Late Egyptian influences.⁶⁷² The magical spells of the papyrus are undoubtedly part of the same magico-medical tradition as the Turin papyrus discussed above, based on its grammar and content. Unfortunately, however, the vocabulary of the magical texts of P. Leiden I 348 is not included in the *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*, and the spells are rarely quoted in the *Grundriss der Medizin der alten Ägypter*.⁶⁷³

The spell we are concerned with here, a spell to ease a stomachache, is spell no. 20 of the Borghouts publication, located at recto 12,2-12,4⁶⁷⁴ (**Fig. 12**). Encompassing two and a half lines of text, with a small lacuna at its beginning, the spell was written by the scribe designated Scribe B by Borghouts, whose signs resemble those of Ennene and Pentwere, Möller's standards of the late 19th Dynasty.⁶⁷⁵



Fig. 12: P. Leiden I 348 rt. 12,2-12,4

⁶⁷¹ Joris F. Borghouts, *The Magical Texts of Papyrus Leiden I 348*. Leiden: Brill, 1971. 3-5; Georg Möller, *Hieratische Paläographie. Die ägyptische Buchschrift in ihrer Entwicklung von der 5. Dynastie bis zur römischen Kaiserzeit*. Osnabrück: Zeller, 1965. II: 10.

⁶⁷² Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 1-6.

⁶⁷³ Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 2.

⁶⁷⁴ Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 4 (layout of the papyrus), 25 (translation), pl. 12 (hieroglyphic transcription) and pl. 29 (photograph of recto 12).

⁶⁷⁵ Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 3, 5; Möller, *Hieratische Paläographie*, II: 10-12.

3.2.2.1 Transliteration

2) *kt* [...] [*ist*]⁶⁷⁶*ḥᶜ.ti ḥr <dd>*⁶⁷⁷*Rᶜ ḥr mn ḥt.f imi ᶜs.tw n*

3) *n3 n(y) wr[w imy ᶜwnw sš]*⁶⁷⁸*.tn Rᶜ ḥr mn ir iri.f ist ḥr mn st nṛ ᶜnh.f ḥry imi ᶜs.tw n r n imnt ḥr s3tw di.f dṛt.f ḥr*

4) *ḥt <.f>*⁶⁷⁹*mn.f r snb dd mdw ḥr rpyt nt sint ir mn.f nb m ḥt h3b g(3)bw*⁶⁸⁰*ḥr.f m t3 rpyt 3st r snb.f*

3.2.2.2 Translation

2) Another [spell for the belly.]⁶⁸¹[The crew] stands <saying>, “Re is suffering (of) his belly. Cause that one summon to

⁶⁷⁶ Plausibly restored by Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 25 n.265-267 and 121, using parallels from Coffin Text 380 and the Metternich Stela.

⁶⁷⁷ Also plausibly restored by Borghouts, with numerous parallels: *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 25 and n.266.

⁶⁷⁸ Following Borghouts’ reconstruction; note that the phrase *wrw nw ᶜwnw* is also found at rt. 13,7 of the papyrus: *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 25 n. 267, and pl. 12 n. 3a. See also Leitz, ed. *Lexikon*, II: 473.

⁶⁷⁹ Borghouts restores here the third person masculine singular suffix pronoun *-f* in one of his translations (*Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 32) and I have followed that restoration here. However, in his transcription of the text, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, pl. 12, the sign he places near the lacuna at the start of line 4 looks like the *mḥ* sign (Möller I: 459; Gardiner Sign-list V22), although Borghouts does not reflect the word in his translation (Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 25). If the word *mḥ* was indeed written, the sentence could read *ḥr ḥt mḥ(w) mn.f* “upon the stomach which is full of his suffering,” taking *mḥ* as a stative form and noting that *ḥt* can sometimes be treated as masculine (For the stative, see Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, §309-311, 317; Hoch, *Middle Egyptian Grammar*, §82-87. For *ḥt* as occasionally masculine, see Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, §92,4; Hoch, *Middle Egyptian Grammar*, 347). As I have not viewed this papyrus in person, I cannot verify which signs remain at the start of line 4, thus I have opted for the simplest reconstruction, “He should put his hand upon <his> belly,” given that the phrase “his belly” also appears in line 2, although I remain open to the equally plausible alternate reading given above.

⁶⁸⁰ Following the reading of Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 25 n. 275; *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 32.

⁶⁸¹ The theme of easing a stomachache is continued from the previous spell in the papyrus, in which the term *ḥt* “belly” appears, although its title is also lost. Borghouts reconstructs the title of our spell, no. 20, as “Another [conjunction of/for the belly]”: Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I 348*, 24-25; *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 32.

3) the great one[s who are in Heliopolis]. <<May you⁶⁸² write: “Re is suffering! If he makes a moment suffering it, the god, will he live⁶⁸³ suffering?”>>⁶⁸⁴ “Cause that one summon to the opening of the West through the earth. He should⁶⁸⁵ put his hand upon

4) <his> belly and his suffering will be healed.”⁶⁸⁶ Words spoken over a female figure⁶⁸⁷ of clay. As for any of his suffering in the belly, the affliction shall go down⁶⁸⁸ from him⁶⁸⁹ into the female figure of Isis until he is healthy.⁶⁹⁰

3.2.2.3 Commentary

As has already been noted, a mythological setting is not unusual for Egyptian magico-medical healing spells. This Leiden spell places the patient in the role of Re, whose stomachache must be healed so that his solar barque can continue on its journey. The scenario is a dramatic cosmic

⁶⁸² i.e. the great ones in Heliopolis

⁶⁸³ A prospective *sdm.f* form: Hoch, *Middle Egyptian Grammar*, §71-72, 137.

⁶⁸⁴ This instance of *hry* is troublesome. Borghouts proposes translating it as “underneath” meaning “in his lower parts,” although he also queries whether *hry* could be an adverb, “under (it)” = “carrying (it)” = “under these circumstances” (Borghouts, *Papyrus Leiden I* 348, 25 and n. 269). In medical texts, *hry*, literally “which is under,” can take on the meaning “suffering from” an illness, and I have used that nuance here (*WB* III: 390, V; Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*. Oxford: Griffith Institute/Ashmolean Museum, 1962. 203; Hannig, *Grosses Handwörterbuch*, 639). Also, although the word appears to be written *hry-pr* according to Borghouts’ transcription, no translation of that phrase seems appropriate here, and the house sign may be an error.

⁶⁸⁵ “He” might be Re, if we believe that the deity is able to heal himself; it could also refer to the practitioner.

⁶⁸⁶ This sentence is the reply from Heliopolis

⁶⁸⁷ The term *rpwt* refers exclusively to images of females, often small, portable representations of goddesses in materials like clay, wax, wood, and gold. The term is also the name of the goddess Repit, who is first attested in the Early Dynastic period, and is used to refer to a ‘lady of distinction’ in the Metternich Stela. See Ursula Rössler-Köhler, “Repit.” *LÄ* V: 236-238, especially n.9; *WB* II: 415, II; Janssen, *Commodity Prices from the Ramessid Period*, 246-248; Pierre Grandet, *Le Papyrus Harris I (BM 9999)*. 3 vols. Cairo: IFAO, 1994-1999. II: 159 especially the references in n.619; II: 281; III: 106; Toby A.H. Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt*. London and New York: Routledge, 1999. 268-269; Borghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 63; Eschweiler, 31-32, 42, 67, 97-100.

⁶⁸⁸ Another prospective *sdm.f*; see n.683.

⁶⁸⁹ The suffix pronoun *-f* can refer either to Re, the patient, or to *ht*, the belly, as both words can be treated as masculine (see above, n.679).

⁶⁹⁰ *r + sdm.f* “until”: Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, §163, 11, b.

event that creates tension in the spell, a sense of immediacy, as does the alternation of narration and dialogue.⁶⁹¹ In reading the spell, one can sense the urgency felt by a patient suffering from a stomachache, his or her desire for rapid relief.

Here, as in the Turin spell, Isis is invoked in her healing capacity, and is envisioned as a female figure of clay. The term *rpyt*, “female image,” is used to identify the magical vehicle over which the spell should be spoken. It first appears in the phrase *rpyt nt sint*, which specifies that the object’s material should be clay, and then in the phrase *rpyt 3st*, which tells us that the female image is conceptualized as a representation of the goddess Isis. This phraseology is more explicit than that of the Turin spell, which, as we have seen, employs the term *sin n 3st* to denote a clay image of Isis. However, just like the Turin spell above, we should associate the magical object specified in this Leiden spell with small, portable, archaeologically attested clay figurines like the Mut Precinct examples.

There may be further associations between the Turin spell addressed above and the Leiden spell at hand. While Borghouts has interpreted the directive in column 3, “Cause that one summon to the opening/mouth of the West through the earth” as an invocation to the underworld⁶⁹² and suggests that “some mighty god of the netherworld is meant; Geb, Anubis, or Osiris?,”⁶⁹³ we might also read this phrase as a call to Isis in her otherworldly role. Summoning Isis through the earth may also be a reference to the organic material of which her image is formed, and through which her healing powers will be realized.⁶⁹⁴ As the word for the West is determined with the “foreign land” determinative, it seems clear that a geographical feature is indicated, and so a reference to Isis in her underworld capacity as Lady of the West⁶⁹⁵ should be inferred.

⁶⁹¹ Klasens, *A Magical Statue Base*, 82; Jørgen Podemann Sørensen, “The Argument in Ancient Egyptian Magical Formulae,” *Acta Orientalia* 45 (1984) 9.

⁶⁹² Borghouts, *P. Leiden I 348*, 25.

⁶⁹³ Borghouts, *P. Leiden I 348*, n.271: 122-123.

⁶⁹⁴ Recall that in another Ramesside magical papyrus, P. Turin 1993, Isis uses her magical powers to fashion a snake from earth (*ts*) and place where it will bite Re so that she can heal the god by learning his secret name: Borghouts, “Magical Texts,” 10-11, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 51-55; Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 76 and n.337; Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition (2006) 29-30. This P. Turin 1993 episode, in addition to the P. Leiden I 348 spell under discussion here, are the evidence against Jørgen Podemann Sørensen’s statement that apart from the P. Turin 54003 spell discussed above, “a mythological tradition that associates her [Isis] with clay is otherwise unknown.”: “The Argument in Ancient Egyptian Magical Formulae,” 12.

⁶⁹⁵ Leitz, ed. *Lexikon*, IV: 17.

It is abundantly clear from the wording of this Leiden spell that a ritual of transference is being described. The narration that concludes the spell specifically states, "As for any of his suffering in the belly, the affliction shall go down from him into the female figure of Isis." Doubtless, the clay female figure of Isis over which the spell was to be recited was intended to act as an agent that could absorb the pains of the stomachache.⁶⁹⁶

That female figures of clay were expected to receive diseases in a rite of transference can help to explain why so many ceramic female figurine fragments, including many of those from the Mut Precinct, have been found painted red, the color of blood and bodily threats, and deliberately broken. Following such a rite, it would be highly unlikely for either a practitioner or a patient to keep a figure believed to have absorbed an ailment. More likely, the figure would be ritually broken and discarded immediately following its use in scenarios like the one detailed in this Leiden spell.

We must presume that, given the high number of extant ceramic female figures from the New Kingdom through Late Period, such objects could be used in any number and variety of healing and apotropaic spells, from those intended to repel snakes like the one attested on P. Turin 54003, to those designed to relieve stomachaches and other ailments such as the Leiden text here. It seems that we have in these Turin and Leiden spells two of what must have been many spells intended to be recited over female figures of clay. Fortunately for us, these spells were written down for consultation on papyrus and have been preserved in the archaeological record. Presumably, many more spells were transmitted orally, or their written forms are lost to us.

We might recall here that there is a Near Eastern literary parallel for a female figure of clay acting as a healing agent. In the Ugaritic epic of Kirta (or Keret), the god El fashions "a female expeller of the sickness, a female banisher of the illness" out of "the very best clay" in order to heal the ailing king, Kirta.⁶⁹⁷ While of a slightly different genre, this literary

⁶⁹⁶ Borghouts, *P. Leiden I 348*, 25 n.276: "A rare example of a clear formulation of the use of such substitute statues."

⁶⁹⁷ Trans. Dennis Pardee in William W. Hallo, ed., *The Context of Scripture*. Leiden: Brill, 1997. I: 341; Theodore J. Lewis, "Syro-Palestinian Iconography and Divine Images." *Cult Image and Divine Representation in the Ancient Near East*. Ed. Neil H. Walls. Boston, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2005. 98; Simon B. Parker, "The Literatures of Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Phoenicia: An Overview." *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Ed. Jack M. Sasson. New York: Scribner, 1995. IV: 2399-2410. I am grateful to Professor Theodore J. Lewis for bringing this text to my attention and providing me with useful bibliography.

excerpt is reminiscent of the Egyptian magico-medical texts presented here, in which the practitioner is instructed to use a female figure of Isis made of the special clay *sin(t)* to heal the patient's ailments. Although it is outside the scope of this work to discuss the full range of healing rituals involving clay figures across the ancient Near East, it can be briefly noted that the association of clay with healing properties, and the attribution of physical healing to a god or goddesses manifest in clay, should not be regarded as exclusively Egyptian traditions, but are present throughout the region.⁶⁹⁸

3.3 Additional Magico-Medical Texts Calling for Objects of *sin(t)*

A number of other magico-medical texts calling for objects of *sin(t)* can be related to baked clay figurines known in the archaeological record. This section presents a brief overview of these texts, together with references to extant artifacts, stressing the deeper and more significant understanding that can be reached when excavated clay objects are analyzed in concert with magico-medical spells.

In addition to the texts calling for female figures of *sin(t)* presented above, at least one magical text of pharaonic date calls for male figures of the special clay: Papyrus British Museum 10081, a Late Period ritual text against enemies.⁶⁹⁹ Translated by Schott in 1930,⁷⁰⁰ the text is of the execration genre discussed in Chapter 2, and reaffirms for us the shared magical powers of clay and wax.⁷⁰¹ The text instructs the practitioner to

⁶⁹⁸ For some recent discussions, see Lewis, "Syro-Palestinian Iconography and Divine Images," 69-107; Ellen McAdam, "Clay Figurines." *Abu Salabikh Excavations 4: The 6G Ash-Tip and its contents: cultic or administrative discard from the temple?* Ed. Anthony Green. London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 1993. 83-109; P.R.S. Moorey, *Idols of the People: Miniature Images of Clay in the Ancient Near East*. Oxford: Oxford University Press for The British Academy, 2003; Carolyn Nakamura, "Dedicating Magic: Neo-Assyrian apotropaic figurines and the protection of Assur." *World Archaeology* 36 (1) (2004) 11-25; JoAnn Scurlock, "Translating Transfers in Ancient Mesopotamia." *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*. Eds. Paul Mirecki and Marvin Meyer. Leiden: Brill, 2002. 209-223; Scurlock, *Magico-Medical Means of Treating Ghost-Induced Illnesses in Ancient Mesopotamia*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006.49-59; F.A.M. Wiggermann, *Babylonian Prophylactic Figures: The Ritual Texts*. Amsterdam: Free University Press, 1986; Wiggermann, *Mesopotamian Protective Spirits: The Ritual Texts*. Groningen: Styx & PP, 1992.

⁶⁹⁹ P. British Museum 10081, col. 36,10: Siegfried Schott, "Drei Sprüche gegen Feinde." *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 65 (1930) 35-42; Maarten J. Raven, "Magic and Symbolic Aspects of Certain Materials in ancient Egypt." *Varia Aegyptiaca* 4 (1988) 241.

⁷⁰⁰ Schott, "Drei Sprüche gegen Feinde," 35-42.

⁷⁰¹ Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 683; Raven, "Wax in Egyptian Magic and Symbolism." *Oudheidkundige Mededeelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden* 64 (1983) 7-47, and "Magic and Symbolic Aspects of Certain Materials in ancient Egypt," 237-242.

speak the spell over enemy figures made out of “wax or clay” – *mnḥ sin(t) r-pw* – revealing that the two materials were interchangeable for the purposes of this rite.

As noted in section 2.4, clay figures of bound humans are well known in the archaeological record, and have long been recognized as execration figures to be used in rites like the one detailed in P. British Museum 10081. It is not surprising, then, that many of these clay figurines of male – and occasionally female⁷⁰² – enemies are found in fragmentary condition, as they were to be destroyed in the ritual. Just as we recognize these clay enemy figurines as remnants of execration rites calling for figures of *sin(t)*, so should we recognize deliberately broken female figurines of clay as remnants of healing and apotropaic rites calling for female images of *sin(t)*.

Moving from anthropomorphic clay figurines to those of animals, Kasia Szpakowska has recently linked the [*ʕrʕr*]ywt *irw m sin wʕb* – “uraei made of pure clay” – of O. Gardiner 363⁷⁰³ with painted ceramic cobra figurines known from sites like Amarna, Memphis, and Qantir.⁷⁰⁴ Robert Ritner was not far from this association in his translation and commentary of the latter text, having proposed that the uraei of clay served “as lamps in each corner of the bedroom,”⁷⁰⁵ although he did not make a direct link between the extant statuettes and the *ʕrʕrywt* in his article.⁷⁰⁶

Szpakowska’s identification of the fired clay cobras as objects named and utilized in magical rituals is another example of what can be achieved when close readings of magico-medical texts are combined with

⁷⁰² Michael Rice Collection, London: Peter Munro, “Zu einigen ägyptischen Terrakotta figuren.” *Göttinger Miszellen* 2 (1972) 28 and Abb. 2, and Ritner, “So-called “Predynastic Hamster-headed” Figurines in London and Hanover.” *Göttinger Miszellen* 111 (1989) 85-95 and fig.1.

⁷⁰³ Robert K. Ritner, “O. Gardiner 363: A Spell Against Night Terrors.” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 27 (1990) 25-41.

⁷⁰⁴ “Playing with Fire: Initial Observations on the Religious Uses of Clay Cobras from Amarna.” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 40 (2003) 113-122.

⁷⁰⁵ Ritner, “O. Gardiner 363,” 34,

⁷⁰⁶ Note, however, that Ritner also restores the word [*ʕrʕr*]t “uraeus” in the rubric of a related spell, P. Chester Beatty VIII (=P. BM 10688) vs. 3,1, which reads [...]t *irw m sint t3*, “[...]made of clay of the earth”; “O. Gardiner 363,” 32; Alan H. Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum*. Third Series. Chester Beatty Gift. London: British Museum, 1935. pl. 44. If Ritner’s restoration of *ʕrʕryt* is correct, which seems likely, then the clay object called for in the Chester Beatty spell should also be linked with extant cobra figurines like those discussed by Szpakowska.

detailed material and contextual studies of archaeological small finds. This same approach has been used here, albeit in more detail.

There are, in fact, numerous parallels between the baked clay cobras studied by Szpakowska and the ceramic female figurines under study here. Apart from their contemporaneous occurrence at many of the same sites (Amarna, Memphis/Kom Rabi'a, etc.), the function of the ceramic cobras has not always been clear. Like many female figurines, the cobras have usually been interpreted as votive objects, in this case associated with the agricultural goddess Renenutet. However, Szpakowska has rightly noted that this is merely one possible interpretation, and that "[i]f this were indeed the case, then the proliferation of these objects would suggest that the cult of this goddess was more extensive than has previously been suspected."⁷⁰⁷ Szpakowska seeks an alternate explanation for the cobra figures by looking more closely at their excavated context, examining in detail their methods of manufacture, and producing textual evidence for their use in magical rituals.

To summarize, Szpakowska's study reveals that baked clay cobra most frequently occur in domestic zones, but have also been found at fortress sites and in burials.⁷⁰⁸ These contexts are the same as those in which New Kingdom female figurines have been found. Szpakowska adds that at Amarna, ceramic cobras were specifically found "[j]ust outside the walled workmen's village...and in the North Suburb,"⁷⁰⁹ suggesting a refuse context similar to that of many ceramic female figurines from the site.⁷¹⁰ These Amarna cobras were also found in association with ceramic bowls in which they were apparently placed.⁷¹¹ More generally, clay cobras from a variety of sites have been found together with other artifacts "typically connected to domestic use such as headrests, figures of Bes and Taweret, male and female clay figurines, clay or mud balls and animal figurines, and a variety of amulets."⁷¹² We can note that many of the latter classes of objects have also been found at the Mut Precinct, although from what appears to be an industrial, rather than a domestic, setting.

As for the cobras' manufacture, Szpakowska looks in-depth at two figurines from Amarna and relates that they were handmade of Nile silt,

⁷⁰⁷ "Playing with Fire," 114.

⁷⁰⁸ "Playing with Fire," 113, 114, 119.

⁷⁰⁹ "Playing with Fire," 113-114.

⁷¹⁰ See "How Religious were the Ancient Egyptians?" *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 5:1 (1995) 30-31 and Fig. 3, and the discussion above in Chapter 2.2.

⁷¹¹ Szpakowska, "Playing with Fire," 114.

⁷¹² Szpakowska, "Playing with Fire," 119.

likely Nile B2, and sport pinched heads and appliqué elements like circular eyes and tails, techniques which we have seen on some classes of female figurines.⁷¹³ Many cobras were likewise painted post-firing in the colors red, yellow, black, and/or blue, as were many New Kingdom female figures, and areas of white material can also be seen on the cobras.⁷¹⁴ The latter have been identified above as the possible remains of a white base for colored pigments. These manufacturing materials and techniques are similar enough to the production of ceramic female figurines from Amarna and elsewhere to warrant the supposition that the cobra figures, too, were fashioned to standard forms in a workshop setting where clay, pigments, and kilns were readily available.

In addition to the shared contexts and manufacturing techniques of clay cobras and females, the textual sources for the two types of objects are also analogous, in terms of both genre and vocabulary. As mentioned above, the most explicit text calling for cobras of clay is O. Gardiner 363, a magical spell to protect a sleeping couple. We have already seen that one of the Egyptian words for clay, *sin*, is both a preferred term for the material of magical figures, as well as a term for “clay figure” itself. In O. Gardiner 363, the term describes the material of which the cobras were to be made. But *sin* is not used alone – the directives at the end of the spell relate that it is to be recited over objects *irw m sin wʿb*, “made of pure clay.”⁷¹⁵ The fact that this magical text includes the word *wʿb*, which is also used to denote ritual purity in temple and funerary environments, suggests that the clay from which the cobras were fashioned had to somehow be purified, whether in a material way at the time of their manufacture, or in a notional way during their manufacture and/or manipulation in the rite.

From the manufacturing standpoint, the phrase might simply refer to clay that has not been tempered with other materials, that is, raw clay. However, if indeed this *sin* is a description for material of cobra figurines known archaeologically, we can repeat that it does not mean “marl,” as Harris suggested and others have followed,⁷¹⁶ but a special type of clay used in the fashioning of magical images, since extant cobra figures are made from Nile silt. In addition, since Szpakowska has identified the fabric of at least two cobra figurines as Nile B2,⁷¹⁷ which is described in the

⁷¹³ “Playing with Fire,” 117-118 and n.16.

⁷¹⁴ Szpakowska, “Playing with Fire,” 118.

⁷¹⁵ O. Gardiner 363 line 9: Ritner, “O. Gardiner 363,” 25-27, 36-41; Szpakowska, “Playing with Fire,” 121.

⁷¹⁶ i.e. Dorman, *Faces in Clay*, 30.

⁷¹⁷ “Playing with Fire,” 117 n.16.

Vienna System as having “mineral and organic inclusions in larger sizes and in greater quantities [than Nile B1],” “abundant inclusions of fine sand,” and “conspicuous amounts of fine to medium straw,”⁷¹⁸ we should perhaps dismiss the notion that *šin wꜥb* refers to untempered or homogeneous clay. Instead, we might lean towards the conclusion that the phrase is used in a metaphorical or religious sense rather than a literal one.

For the purposes of magical spells like O. Gardiner 363, a cobra figurine of “pure clay” might mean a figure fashioned from clay that had not been used previously for any kind of object or vessel, or clay over which a purification spell had been recited. As figurine workshops were often located inside temple precincts, priestly staff who could enact such a rite of purification over the clay would have been available at the location to do so. Alternatively, if the purification took place during the ritual instead of at the time of manufacture, the practitioner called upon to recite the spell was probably also versed in spells of purification, given the close link between texts of the magico-medical genre and temple rites,⁷¹⁹ as well as the occupational overlap between local healers and priests employed at temples.⁷²⁰ It seems most likely that *šin wꜥb* refers on one level to the special clay from which the magical vehicle was formed, and, on a more religious level, to its ritual purity rather than its organic purity.

A related inquiry can be made into objects said to be made of *šin wꜥd*. This is the phrase used in Chapter 151 of the Book of the Dead to describe the four bricks placed in the burial chamber of royal, private, and Apis bull tombs.⁷²¹ The phrase *šin wꜥd*, which is most often rendered literally as “fresh clay,” is also employed in Chapter 151 for a recumbent figure of Anubis,⁷²² and again raises the question of whether this phrase refers exclusively to clay in its raw state, or whether another layer of meaning can be inferred from *wꜥd*.

Roth and Roehrig, following the standard translations of the text, read *wꜥd* in its literal sense as “fresh,” “raw,” noting that the specific

⁷¹⁸ Nordström and Bourriau, “Ceramic Technology: Clays and Fabrics,” 171-172.

⁷¹⁹ Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition (2006) 63-64; Joachim F. Quack, “La magie au temple.” *La magie en Egypte. Actes du colloque organise par le Musée du Louvre les 29 et 30 septembre 2000*. Paris: Louvre, 2002. 41-68.

⁷²⁰ Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition (2006) 51-60; Borghouts, “Witchcraft, Magic, and Divination in Ancient Egypt,” 1783-1784.

⁷²¹ See most recently: Ann M. Roth and Catharine H. Roehrig, “Magical Bricks and the Bricks of Birth.” *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 88 (2002) 121-139 and the bibliography cited therein.

⁷²² Elizabeth Thomas, “The Four Niches and Amuletic Figures in Theban Royal Tombs.” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 3 (1964) 71.

instructions given in Chapter 151 state that “the bricks are to be unbaked.”⁷²³ However, they also relate that numerous preserved examples of magical bricks are in fact of fired clay,⁷²⁴ and Aufrère, citing Monnet’s study of magical bricks preserved in the Louvre,⁷²⁵ notes that the material used for the bricks “...n’est pas fondamentalement différente de celle qui sert à la poterie où se retrouvent des composants similaires.”⁷²⁶ In other words, many extant examples of these magical bricks and accompanying Anubis figures are of fired Nile silt, the same fabric used for most Egyptian ceramic vessels and figurines.⁷²⁷

Another group of objects made of the special clay *sin(t)* that can be linked with archaeological artifacts are clay balls or *bnnwt nt sint*. From textual sources, we know that clay balls were employed in apotropaic rites. In the ritual of “Revealing the Mysteries of the Four Balls,”⁷²⁸ words were spoken over four clay balls on which the names of deities associated with the four cardinal directions were inscribed. The balls were then thrown or hit in the four directions in order to ensure the protection of Osiris.⁷²⁹ Numerous balls of clay inscribed with the names of deities have been excavated at sites like Tuna el-Gebel and Tehneh, and are now in the Louvre.⁷³⁰

⁷²³ “Magical Bricks,” 122.

⁷²⁴ “Magical Bricks,” 123-124.

⁷²⁵ Janine Monnet, “Les Briques magiques du musée du Louvre.” *Revue d’égyptologie* 8 (1951) 150-162.

⁷²⁶ Aufrère, *L’univers minéral*, 691.

⁷²⁷ For a recent discussion of some baked examples, see David P. Silverman, “Magical Bricks of Hunuro.” *Studies in Honor of William Kelly Simpson*. Ed. Peter der Manuelian. Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1996. II: 725-741. See also the unbaked clay bricks and jackal figure preserved in the British Museum, EA 41544-41547: W.V. Davies, ed., *Studies in Egyptian antiquities: a tribute to T.G.H. James*. London: British Museum, 1999. 63 and pl. X.

⁷²⁸ The ritual is preserved on at least four papyri, as well as the walls of the Hibis Temple at Kharga Oasis: Jean-Claude Goyon, “Les Révélations du Mystère des Quatres Boules.” *Bulletin de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale* 75 (1975) 349-399; Aufrère, *L’univers minéral*, 683; Marc Étienne, *Heka: Magie et envoûtement dans l’Égypte ancienne*. Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 2000. 36-39

⁷²⁹ Goyon, “Les Révélations du Mystère des Quatres Boules,” 349-399; Aufrère, *L’univers minéral*, 683.

⁷³⁰ Louvre E12202-12205, E 12208, E 12209, E 12211, E12196-12199: Christiane Ziegler, “À propos du rite des quatre boules.” *Bulletin de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale* 79 (1979) 437-439; Aufrère, *L’univers minéral*, 683; Étienne, *Heka*, 38, cat. 57-60, fig. 11. Further examples of magical clay balls are listed in Ziegler, 438 n.2 and 439 n.4, and Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 112-115.

A spell to protect the body in Papyrus Leiden I 348 also calls for balls of clay.⁷³¹ Mythological allusion is strong in this spell, which lists individual body parts and the deities who protect them. The spell concludes with the directive, *dd mdw hr bnnwt nt sin* “Words recited over balls of clay...” Although the Leiden spell does not specifically state that deities’ names were to be inscribed on the balls, we can imagine that they would have been of similar shape and size to the clay balls preserved at the Louvre.⁷³²

In addition, more than 100 model balls have been excavated at Amarna.⁷³³ Another hundred clay balls have recently been uncovered at the temple of Osiris-*iu* at ‘Ayn Manâwir in Kharga Oasis (5th-4th century BCE).⁷³⁴ Some of the Amarna clay balls are inscribed with royal names, hieroglyphs, or animal and plant motifs,⁷³⁵ as are most of the ‘Ayn Manâwir balls.⁷³⁶ At least 25 of the Amarna balls appear to contain human hair,⁷³⁷ and some are covered with white gypsum powder.⁷³⁸ Caris-Beatrice Arnst has suggested that clay balls containing human hair – some of which have been shown to contain the hair of a small child – were employed in magical rites to protect children.⁷³⁹ Anna Stevens similarly sees the Amarna balls containing hair as potential ritual objects, though she does not favor any one rite in particular.⁷⁴⁰ Clay balls, both with hair and without, have also been recovered from mortuary contexts at Abydos, Dahshur, Kahun, Raqaqna, and Zawiyet el-Aryan.⁷⁴¹ While many of the above-referenced

⁷³¹ Papyrus Leiden I 348 rt. 4,10-6,4; Borghouts, *P. Leiden I 348*, 19-20, pls. 6 and 23.

⁷³² Borghouts regards the clay balls of this spell as amulets applied to the body of the patient (*P. Leiden I 348*, 20). As we would expect such objects to be small and portable, we can use the approximately four-centimeter diameter balls in the Louvre to envision the type of balls used in this ritual.

⁷³³ Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 112.

⁷³⁴ Michel Wuttman, Laurent Coulon, and Florence Gombert, “An Assemblage of Bronze Statuettes in a Cult Context: The Temple of ‘Ayn Manâwir.” *Gifts for the Gods: Images from Egyptian Temples*. Ed. Marsha Hill, with Deborah Schorsch, technical editor. Metropolitan Museum of Art/Yale University Press, 2007. 172.

⁷³⁵ Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 112.

⁷³⁶ Wuttman, Coulon and Gombert, “An Assemblage of Bronze Statuettes in a Cult Context: The Temple of ‘Ayn Manâwir,” 172.

⁷³⁷ Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 112-115 and Fig. II.2.28; Caris-Beatrice Arnst, “Nilschlammkugeln mit Haaren: Zum Opfer des ersten Haarschnitts.” *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 133 (2006) 10-19 and Tafel I-V.

⁷³⁸ Arnst, “Nilschlammkugeln,” 10.

⁷³⁹ Arnst, “Nilschlammkugeln,” 10-19.

⁷⁴⁰ Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 113, 115.

⁷⁴¹ Stevens, *Private Religion at Amarna*, 113; Arnst, “Nilschlammkugeln,” 10-12 and 19.

balls are fashioned from raw and not baked Nile silt, they are nevertheless extant examples of objects made of *sint* to be used in a magical rite.

Yet another ritual featuring rounded clay objects is a magico-medical recitation calling for an “egg of clay” (*swht n sin*).⁷⁴² In this ritual, the speaker is to act as Min of Koptos and recite the spell over a clay egg. The egg is then to be given to a man at the front of a boat, who should throw the egg into the water “if there appears the one who is on the water,” a euphemistic phrase for a crocodile.⁷⁴³ Here again, the clay object acts as not only as a magical vehicle that receives magical words, but also one that is manipulated by ritual action: the clay egg must be thrown into the water – and therefore destroyed – to be truly effective. It is not surprising, then, that extant eggs of clay are not known archaeologically, although they were undoubtedly hand-sized objects like the clay balls discussed above.

Another spell from Papyrus Leiden I 348 that can be directly related to extant objects of clay is a spell to ease childbirth, to be recited four times over a “dwarf of clay” (*nm n sin*).⁷⁴⁴ Again, this expression likely refers to a small, portable image that was intended to embody the god Bes for the duration of the spell.⁷⁴⁵ The required image may have shown Bes in his standard form,⁷⁴⁶ or could also have been a generic dwarf modeled out of clay, examples of which are also known in the archaeological record.⁷⁴⁷

We can also take note of numerous other magico-medical spells that call for zoomorphic forms of *sin* that can be seen archaeologically. Like the female figures, cobras, balls, and dwarf called for in the above texts, these zoomorphic objects also likely evoked deities for the purposes of healing.

⁷⁴² P. BM EA 10042 (=The Harris Magical Papyrus), rt. VI, 10-VII, 1: Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri*, 39-40 and pl. 17. This spell is also translated in Borghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 87.

⁷⁴³ Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri*, 39-40.

⁷⁴⁴ P. Leiden I 348 vs. 12,2-12,6: Borghouts, *P. Leiden I 348*, 29. This spell is also translated in Borghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 39.

⁷⁴⁵ Borghouts, *P. Leiden I 348*, 29 and especially n.370, with further references. See also Borghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 39 and n.147, and Aufrère, *L'univers minéral*, 682.

⁷⁴⁶ See the recently excavated Bes figurines from Memphis/Kom Rabi'a, EES 380, EES 461, EES 549 and EES 811/EAO 43, in Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, pp. 46-47, pls. 13, 81-82.

⁷⁴⁷ Borghouts, *P. Leiden I 348*, n.370; F. Ballod, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte der zwerghaften Götter in Ägypten*. Moscow: H. Liessner & D. Sobko, 1913. 94; and possibly another from Abydos, Oxford Ashmolean Museum E 275: Véronique Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt and Greece*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993. 274 cat. 103.

The first, found in the New Kingdom papyrus P. BM EA 10059, is a spell to prevent bleeding. The directives at the end of the spell are as elaborate as those given for the other clay objects noted above: the spell is to be recited over an ibis of clay (*hby n sin*) “whose snout is filled with the *ḥm*-parts of grain.” The beak of the clay bird is then to be placed at the opening of the wound. The spell concludes by saying that “it was effective in the time of Amenhotep III,” providing a *terminus a quo* for the manuscript, as well as offering historical legitimacy for the rite.⁷⁴⁸

Although the *Grundriss der Medizin* categorizes the “ibis of clay” of P. BM EA 10059 as acting “als Zauberdroge in einer Wundbehandlung,”⁷⁴⁹ this interpretation is not exactly correct.⁷⁵⁰ The ibis of clay should not to be understood as a drug in and of itself, that is, as raw material to be ingested or smeared, because such a use would have been specifically stated in the text using the appropriate verbs. The *hby n sin* is rather a figurine or amulet manipulated by the healer.⁷⁵¹ The text says that he should speak the spell over (*hr*) it, and place (*rdi*) it at the opening of the wound. The clay ibis is therefore both a magical receiver of an incantation, and a magical vehicle applied to the patient’s body – a small but important distinction from a “Zauberdroge.” If anything, it is the grain parts placed inside the figure’s beak that were perceived as a drug able to absorb or staunch the flow of blood, with the bird’s beak being the “syringe” through

⁷⁴⁸ P. BM EA 10059 (=The London Medical Papyrus) X, 4-5: Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri*, 70 and pl. 35.

⁷⁴⁹ Hildegard von Deines and Hermann Grapow, eds., *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Drogennamen. Grundriss der Medizin der Alten Ägypter VI*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1959. 425-426.

⁷⁵⁰ Although compare the ibis of wax (*hby n mnḥ*) prescribed in P. Ebers 94,7, which is more clearly used as a type of “drug.” There, the figure is to be melted atop charcoals, and the resulting smoke used to fumigate a woman’s vagina “to cause the going down of the uterus to its place”: Walter Wreszinski, *Der Papyrus Ebers, Umschrift, Übersetzung und Kommentar*. Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1913. 193; WB II, 487; Grapow and Erichsen. *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache. Die Belegstellen*. Vol. II/2, 739; Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine*, 195.

⁷⁵¹ See the following bird figures of clay, although not all take the form of an ibis: EES 816/EAO 44, EES 609, EES 799, EES 832, EES 920, EES 1721, and EES 1565, from Memphis/Kom Rabi’a (Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 312-314, pls. 68-70); Petrie Museum UC 15203, UC 21183, and Amarna Small Finds Database no. 35/155: <http://www.amarnaproject.com/pages/recent_projects/material_culture/small_finds/data_base.shtml>. Note that like many ceramic female figurines, the ceramic birds from Memphis/Kom Rabi’a were often recovered from pottery baskets, and were frequently painted red: Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 308-309.

which the magical remedy was administered.⁷⁵² The clay ibis figure as a whole, then, should be regarded as a magical vehicle rather than a drug in and of itself.

We should further note that the ibis in question in this spell was likely an embodiment of the god Thoth, whose epithets included *hby mnḥ ḥkz* ("Ibis excellent of magic") and who was frequently invoked in magico-medical spells.⁷⁵³ This is yet another use of an object of *sin* as the embodiment of a healing deity. Similar to the ways in which female figurines could embody Isis, and dwarf figurines, Bes, the small ibis figure of P. BM EA 10059 was intended to act as Thoth, inventor of magic and writing and restorer of the lunar eye to the injured Horus.

Two final magico-medical texts calling for objects of *sin* are spells from the Chester Beatty papyri. The first, from P. Chester Beatty VII, is an utterance to repel a scorpion. The spell is, not surprisingly, to be spoken over a scorpion of clay, using the common magical technique of "like vs. like."⁷⁵⁴

The spell contains the speech that the practitioner is to utter over the figure, although it lacks concluding directives. However, like several of the spells we have seen above, the Chester Beatty text is very specific in its description of the materials to be used in the rite. It reads,

"Another. A mouth against a mouth, a tooth against a tooth! Re guards <the> poison of the scorpion which I have made out of clay, <its> base being of turquoise which I have put on you [...with (?) a bundle (?)] of *hḏn*-plants until I release the one whose body is mysterious! Come forth my utterance, according as [I] have said; I am Horus, who made you! Break out, scorpion!"⁷⁵⁵

Here, the word *sin* appears again as the main material out of which the practitioner is to fashion the scorpion figure (*whḥt*).⁷⁵⁶ The clay scorpion is then embellished with turquoise (*mfkzt*) and, despite a lacuna, also seems

⁷⁵² Such a use for the ibis of clay is also advocated by Sydney Aufrère, who states that, "...il est conseillé d'employer un ibis de terre sigillaire (*hbi n sin*) en vue de dispenser les soins...": *L'univers minéral*, 683.

⁷⁵³ Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 35 n.160; Leitz, ed. *Lexikon*, II: 309; Leitz, *Magical and Medical Papyri*, 12, 34, 67; Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine*, 102, 110; Sauneron, *Un Traité Égyptien d'Ophiologie*, 61-62, §43b.

⁷⁵⁴ Kákossy, *Egyptian Healing Statues in Three Museums in Italy*, 17-18. Kákossy notes (18 n.103) that a modern derivative of the rite is recorded in Gaston Wiet, ed. and trans., *L'Égypte de Murtadi, fils du Gaphiphe*. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1953. 114.

⁷⁵⁵ P. Chester Beatty VII, rt. 7,5-7,7: Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum*, 60 and pl. 35. Translation after Borghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 79.

⁷⁵⁶ P. Chester Beatty VII, rt. 7,6.

to be wrapped in or somehow treated with *hḏn*-plant. This recalls the female figure of clay in P. Turin 54003, which was to be treated with *dbit* or *ʿnb* plants.⁷⁵⁷ This Chester Beatty text, dating to the Ramesside period, again reminds us that a variety of organic elements could be mixed together to create an apotropaic figurine, this one likely operating as Selqet.

Although extant scorpion figures of clay are difficult to locate, likely because they were destroyed or discarded at the end of the ritual,⁷⁵⁸ we can point to one example, UC 11010, at the Petrie Museum. For scorpion figures that incorporate blue material, we can recall the glass scorpion in the British Museum,⁷⁵⁹ as well as abundant examples in faience that would, in their blue-green coloring, resemble turquoise.⁷⁶⁰

The second Chester Beatty magical spell calling for an object of *sin(t)* is found in P. Chester Beatty V. It is a spell to dispel a headache that asks a host of deities “to remove that enemy, dead man or dead woman, adversary male or female which is in the face of N, born of M,” and is to be recited over a crocodile of clay. The spell states that the crocodile figure, like the ibis figure discussed above, should have grain in its mouth, as well as “its eye as faience set [in] its head.”⁷⁶¹ Again, we see that embellishing the clay figure with other materials increases the magical efficacy of the figurine. The spell concludes with directives for the practitioner to tie a strip of linen on the patient’s head, and to speak over images of various deities as well. Clearly, the crocodile of clay was just one of several magical elements necessary for this particular spell, and it may have embodied a protective deity, perhaps Sobek, although he is not specifically named in the list of deities. As for extant crocodile figurines in clay, we can point to examples in the Petrie Museum as the type of object that may have been used in rituals like the one detailed in this Chester Beatty spell.⁷⁶²

⁷⁵⁷ Borghouts has noted a further similarity between these two texts: that the venomous creatures were not to move until the spell had come forth from the mouth of the magician: *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*, 79 n.272.

⁷⁵⁸ Magdalena Stoof has noted, “Amulette in Gestalt eines Landskorpions sind verhältnismässig selten belegt, wenn man ihre Anzahl mit der Fülle anderer Amulettformen vergleicht.”: *Skorpion und Skorpiongöttin im alten Ägypten*. Berlin: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 2002. 160. This may indeed be because the scorpion figures were destroyed at the conclusion of a rite similar to the one described in P. Chester Beatty VII.

⁷⁵⁹ BM EA 60959: Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd edition (2006) 142 fig. 76.

⁷⁶⁰ e.g. UC 11000: Magdalena Stoof, *Skorpion und Skorpiongöttin im alten Ägypten*, 77 and abb. 110.

⁷⁶¹ P. Chester Beatty V, v.4,5-4,6: Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum*, 51 and pls. 28 and 28A.

⁷⁶² UC 6678 from Koptos and UC 7193-7198 and 7236i from Lahun. These figurines can be viewed online by searching the Petrie Museum catalogue at <<http://www.petrie.ucl.ac.uk/>

The above review of magico-medical texts calling for objects made of *sin(t)* reveals not only that the “special clay” called *sin(t)* was a regular material component of such rites, but also that extant objects can be matched with these texts. Previously, texts like those presented above have received the attention of philologists, but rarely have they been utilized in combination with artifacts themselves. Archaeological publications often fail to mention that clay objects might be the remnants of healing or apotropaic rites attested in texts, leaving the figurines vaguely classified as “objects of daily life” and thus overlooking potentially crucial evidence for ritual activity at the site.⁷⁶³

While this investigation is mainly concerned with nude female figurines like those found at the Mut Precinct and the texts that can shed light on their ancient function, the above compendium of magical texts calling for objects of *sin(t)* provides just a brief glimpse of the connections that can and should be made between magico-medical texts and other types of clay objects. It is the hope of this author that future studies of baked clay artifacts will consider magico-medical use as one of the possible functions of the pieces. A magico-medical function may help excavators to explain why so many clay objects are recovered in refuse zones and in broken condition, as well as elucidate the choice of their material, their iconography, and any evidence of their mass production. Connecting baked clay figurines with the abundant textual sources for the use of clay figures in magico-medical rites adds new depth to discussions of objects which, although perhaps not the most aesthetically pleasing class of Egyptian artifact, are some of the best evidence for quotidian concerns and rites in ancient Egyptian society.

[index2.html](#)>. Note that while the figurines UC 7193-7198 have been classified as “toys,” they may in fact be ritual objects for adults: Stephen Quirke, “Figures of clay: toys or ritual objects?” *Lahun Studies* (1998) 141-151.

⁷⁶³ Two exceptions, also noted above, are Jean Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, 62, n.101 and Hans Diederik Schneider, *The Memphite Tomb of Horemheb, commander-in-chief of Tut’ankhamun II. A Catalogue of the Finds*. 61.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study is to elucidate the function of ceramic figurines of nude females in Egypt ca. 1550-332 BCE, in part by reevaluating previous assessments of the objects. It is stressed that female figurines like those from the Mut Precinct were not haphazardly-constructed women's objects connected solely with childbearing, but instead standardized implements utilized in a variety of health-related rituals. Several new and significant conclusions about Egyptian female figurines have been drawn throughout this multidisciplinary study, which combines archaeological, art historical, material, and textual analyses. Following a brief summary of the preceding chapters and a recapitulation the salient conclusions, a scenario for the ritual use of female figurines at the Mut Precinct will be presented.

The preceding chapters consider baked clay female figurines from a variety of angles. Chapter 1 details the history of exploration and excavation at the Mut Precinct site and summarizes the work of the Johns Hopkins Expedition between 2001 and 2004, noting especially the contexts in which female figurines have been found. Chapter 1 also analyzes the state of figurine studies in Egyptology up to the present, including a critique of the popular "fertility figurine" theory. Finally, a new typology is presented for ceramic female figurines of the New Kingdom through Late Period.

Chapter 2 is a detailed material study of baked clay female figurines like those from the Mut Precinct, including identification of their component materials, the methods of their manufacture, and the evidence for their mass-production and subsequent distribution. Chapter 2 also includes a study of the symbolism inherent in the female figurines, with a particular focus on the negative associations embedded in the red wash present on many of the figures. The material study of Chapter 2 enables us to see the deliberate nature of the figurines' production, as well as their destruction, which is highly suggestive of ritual breakage. This breakage is identified as an execrative action intended to prevent the bodily affliction absorbed by the figurine from escaping to re-injure the user. The textual evidence supporting this interpretation is presented in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3 presents new translations and commentary for the two primary texts that give us insight into the conception and use of female figurines in ancient Egyptian society. Magico-medical spells from P. Turin 5400 and P. Leiden I 348 instruct the practitioner to recite the words over clay images of females, in the first case to prevent snakebite, in the second to relieve a stomachache. These magico-medical spells enable us to understand that clay images of females were not only used in a votive

capacity for female reproductive concerns, as has been proposed in the past, but were manipulated in rituals aimed at a host of medical issues, with the overarching goal of keeping the patient healthy. Chapter 3 also suggests a new reading for the Egyptian word *sn*, which the author believes can be translated ‘clay figurine’ in addition to simply ‘clay.’ Finally, Chapter 3 reviews a variety of additional magico-medical spells calling for images of clay, and connects these images to objects known in the archaeological record, demonstrating the widespread use of clay figures in Egyptian healing rites.

The first salient observation that must be reiterated here is that the excavated context of most Egyptian ceramic female figurines is a secondary one, one of disposal. At the Mut Precinct, female figurines have been found in outlying areas away from the main sanctuary, frequently in refuse zones containing large amounts of discarded ceramic and industrial material. This suggests, as does Kemp’s study of female figurines from the Amarna Workmen’s Village, that female figurines were of limited use to their ancient owners. Such a secondary context reveals that the figurines were of temporary concern to their ancient owners and were deemed unnecessary – or better, unwanted – once they had served their primary purpose.

That the figurines’ primary function was a ritual one can be reconstructed from evidence such as their fragmentary state when excavated, and the magico-medical spells discussed above. However, we must bear in mind that this primary context cannot be seen archaeologically, at least at the Mut Precinct. What we witness is the final stage of the objects’ life, their disposal as refuse, and not their locus of use when whole. The latter can only be conjectured using circumstantial evidence, as will be done below.

A second, related observation integral to this study is that ceramic female figurines of the New Kingdom through Late Period are frequently recovered in fragments. Moreover, the patterns of breakage visible on these fragments strongly suggest that the figures were deliberately destroyed prior to their disposal. All 42 female figurines recovered by Johns Hopkins at the Mut Precinct are fragmentary, being either the upper or lower half of a nude female, or two joining halves (cat. no. 2). The location and nature of the breakage – a clean, lateral break at the female’s torso-hip region, often the thickest and most durable part of the figure – indicate that such breakage was enacted purposefully and with calculated force. This breakage could have been achieved through a two-handed grip and a snapping motion, or with a hammer or pestle brought down firmly upon the female’s mid-section. We should recall that limestone images of Type 2

females also exhibit these same patterns of breakage, indicating that deliberate destruction was consistently enacted on female figures, regardless of their material, at the conclusion of the ritual.

A further signal of the ritual nature of ceramic female figurines is their frequent decoration with a red wash. This red wash is present not only on numerous figurines from the Mut Precinct, but a significant number of parallel figures from other sites, indicating that it was an essential component of the objects. However, the purpose of the red wash on female figures has never before been explored in-depth.

It is well-known that for the Egyptians, red was the color of harmful entities, be they deities or diseases, and was frequently used for both words and images of malevolent forces, most notably on execration materials. When viewed in light of Egyptian execration rites, and together with the archaeological context and condition of the figures, the presence of the color red on ceramic female figurines suggests that the objects were envisioned as evil at some stage in their ritual use, and thus needed to be execrated through deliberate destruction and subsequent disposal.

The textual evidence for the use of female images of clay in magico-medical rituals provides us with the specific scenarios in which such objects were used, and clues as to why they were deliberately destroyed. No Egyptian would have desired to keep an object that had magically absorbed a bodily threat in their immediate vicinity. Therefore, breaking the figure to prevent the disease from escaping, and disposing of the figure in order to ensure the safety of a space, are logical actions to be taken at the conclusion of a healing ritual.

Moving from material to notional concerns, the iconography of ceramic female figurines has long been identified as one evocative of fertility and sexuality.⁷⁶⁴ This is no doubt the case. However, in this work, the iconography of the nude female is understood in a broader fashion than in previous studies. If we believe that fertile, sexual women were embodiments of a healthy person, then we understand why the icon of a nude female figure was appropriate for use in a health-related ritual.

⁷⁶⁴ See e.g. Gay Robins, "Ancient Egyptian Sexuality." *Discussions in Egyptology* 11 (1988) 67-68; *Women in Ancient Egypt*. London: BM Press, 1993. 75-77, 161, 163; "Dress, Undress, and the Representation of Fertility and Potency in New Kingdom Egyptian art." *Sexuality in Ancient Art*. Ed. Natalie B. Kampen. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996. 28-30; *The Art of Ancient Egypt*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1997. 114, 116, 190; Geraldine Pinch, "Childbirth and Female Figurines at Deir el-Medina and el-'Amarna." *Orientalia* 52 (1983) 405-414; *Votive Offerings to Hathor*. Oxford: Griffith Institute/Ashmolean Museum, 1993. 211-225; and the bibliography cited therein.

A related inquiry concerns the identification of clay figurines of generic females with the magical vehicles prescribed in the P. Turin 54003 and P. Leiden I 348 spells, both of which specify a clay image of a goddess. It has been proposed here that at a certain moment of the ritual, for the purposes of healing, the female figurine of clay was believed to embody a goddess with magical curative powers. This goddess could be Isis, mentioned in both the Turin and Leiden spells, Selqet, or a host of others, including, of course, Mut.

This study asserts that the reason the figures represent generic females, and not canonical images of deities, is to protect the goddess being called upon from the very affliction she was being asked to combat. Only at a particular moment of the ritual, when the goddess' name was invoked, did the figurine become the required deity through the practitioner's magical utterances. Once the figure had performed its duty and absorbed or repelled the affliction, it then became a receptacle of evil and thus needed to be destroyed. The iconography of these figurines therefore serves two interrelated purposes: to display the characteristics of a healthy person through representation of the nude female body, and to protect the healing goddess invoked in the spell by appearing as a generic female. Here it is apt to recall the incident in the *Tale of Hours and Seth* in which Hathor exposes herself to a disgruntled Re in order to cheer him, that is, for curative effect.⁷⁶⁵ This literary-mythological episode reveals not only the belief that goddesses could act as healing agents, but also the conception of the nude female body as an emblem of good health.

Having reviewed the most significant conclusions regarding the context and function of Egyptian ceramic female figurines of the New Kingdom through Late Period, we may now attempt to reconstruct the mechanisms by which the figurines were used at the Mut Precinct.

We should first note that magical activities at state temples in general – and at the Mut Precinct in particular – are already well-documented for the periods under discussion.⁷⁶⁶ Utilizing the information

⁷⁶⁵ P. Chester Beatty I, rt. 4,1-4,3; Miriam Lichtheim, comp. *Ancient Egyptian Literature: a book of readings*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976. II: 216. Michèle Broze, *Les Aventures d'Horus et Seth dans le Papyrus Chester Beatty I*. Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1996. 42-45. I thank Professor Betsy Bryan for this observation.

⁷⁶⁶ Robert K. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1993. 191-250; "Magic." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Donald B. Redford. New York: Oxford UP, 2001. II: 321-336; Joachim F. Quack, "La magie au temple." *La magie en Egypte. Actes du colloque organize par le Musée du Louvre les 29 et 30 septembre 2000*. Paris: Louvre, 2002. 41-68; László Kákósy, *Egyptian Healing Statues in Three Museums in Italy*, 14; Claude Traunecker, "Une Chapelle de magie guérisseuse sur le parvis du temple de Mout à Karnak." *Journal of*

contained in the manual known as the Book of the Temple, Joachim Quack has recently outlined the various roles played by temple staff in magical rituals, including the participation of the scribe of the divine book in destructive (execrative) rites, the role of the scorpion conjurer in both execrative and curative magic, and the Sakhmet priest's function in rituals of appeasement and protection.⁷⁶⁷ Quack notes that the Book of the Temple further references the role of temple employees such as gatekeepers, sculptors, and lector priests in magical practice.⁷⁶⁸ As all of these personnel were active in Thebes during the New Kingdom and later,⁷⁶⁹ we should have little doubt that magical healing rites performed by these persons were a part of the everyday experience at the Precinct of the Goddess Mut.

We also have indisputable evidence that healing rites were enacted at the Mut Precinct thanks to the Brooklyn Museum expedition, which discovered several blocks of a Late Period healing chapel reused in Temple A.⁷⁷⁰ The small, sandstone chapel was built by Horwedja, a high priest of Heliopolis in the reign of Psammetichus I (Dynasty 26), and while the original situation of the chapel remains unknown, Claude Traunecker has suggested that it was located somewhere in the forecourt of the main temple.⁷⁷¹ Of modest dimensions, the chapel walls are decorated with texts describing the mythological healing of Horus from a scorpion bite, which

the American Research Center in Egypt 20 (1985) 65-92; "Une pratique de magie populaire dans les temples de Karnak." *La Magia in Egitto al tempi dei faraoni: Atti Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Milano, 29-31 Ottobre 1985*. Eds. A. Rocatti and Alberto Siliotti. Milan: Edizioni Panini, 1987. 221-242, to cite just a few of the most relevant discussions.

⁷⁶⁷ Quack, "La magie au temple," 44-46.

⁷⁶⁸ Quack, "La magie au temple," 46.

⁷⁶⁹ For individuals with the relevant titles, see: Frédérique von Känel, *Les prêtres-ouâb de Sekhmet et les conjurateurs de Serket*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1984. passim; Günther Vittmann, *Priester und Beamte im Theben der Spätzeit: Genealogische und prosopographische Untersuchungen zum thebanischen Priester- und Beamtentum der 25. und 26. Dynastie*. Wien: Afro-Pub, 1978. passim. See also Christopher J. Eyre, "Work and the Organisation of Work in the New Kingdom." *Labor in the Ancient Near East*. Ed. Marvin A. Powell. New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1987. 190-196, 199-200, on the organization of the Temple of Amun.

⁷⁷⁰ Richard A. Fazzini, "Karnak, precinct of Mut." *Encyclopedia of the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Kathryn A. Bard. London and New York: Routledge, 1999. 399; Richard A. Fazzini and William H. Peck, "Introduction," in Traunecker, "Une Chapelle de magie guérisseuse," 66; Traunecker, "Une Chapelle de magie guérisseuse," 65-92; "Une pratique de magie populaire," 221-222.

⁷⁷¹ Traunecker, "Une Chapelle de magie guérisseuse," 74.

are similar, although slightly earlier in date, to those found on the Metternich stela.⁷⁷²

The inscriptions make clear that the chapel was a structure intimately associated with health and healing. Traunecker proposes that the chapel may have been a place where specialized priests charged amulets with magical power, although he also hypothesizes that it held a healing stela or statue.⁷⁷³ Kákósy believes the chapel housed a stela of Horus on the Crocodiles standing on a base as a cult image, and notes that it was “obviously a place of healing and prophylaxy.”⁷⁷⁴ Traunecker and Kákósy have cataloged numerous other healing statues, stelae, and graffiti from the Theban area, attesting to the widespread use of and belief in these curative monuments in and around Karnak.⁷⁷⁵ We can therefore be confident that state temples played a major role in protecting and healing the gods, the king, and likely everyday persons as well, through the enactment of magical healing rites.

Knowing the magico-medical roles played by temple priests, as well as the function of monuments like healing chapels, statues, and stelae, we must query the role of ceramic female figurines at temple precincts. It has already been determined above that these standardized objects were most likely produced in state-sponsored temple workshops. We must now inquire, were the figurines also *used* within the temple precinct? The answer, at least for the female figurines found at the Mut Precinct, appears to be yes.

Although the Mut Precinct figurines were found in their final context of disposal rather than their primary context of use, their presence amongst trash from the site leads us to conclude that the figurines were utilized in a nearby area, as it is unlikely that ceramic refuse would have been hauled for any long distance prior to its deposition. Therefore, we can deduce that the fragmentary figurines, so often found amongst pottery sherds and other industrial waste at the Mut Precinct, were discarded together with other common trash following their use at the site. The next question becomes, who utilized the figurines at the Mut Precinct?

The answer must remain a conjecture, but the conjecture can be an educated one. The most likely scenario is that literate priests – the classes of magician/physician referenced above – were entrusted with reciting the

⁷⁷² Traunecker, “Une Chapelle de magie guérissante,” 73.

⁷⁷³ Traunecker, “Une Chapelle de magie guérissante,” 74-75.

⁷⁷⁴ Kákósy, *Egyptian Healing Statues in Three Museums in Italy*, 14.

⁷⁷⁵ Kákósy, *Egyptian Healing Statues in Three Museums in Italy*, 14; Traunecker, “Une Chapelle de magie guérissante,” 75-76.

required spells over these figurines. Already employed at the Mut Precinct for more formal rites such as those to appease Sakhmet, the priests would have been on hand to perform less formal healing rituals for individuals at the site as well. The priests would have had the ability to acquire a figurine from a nearby workshop – perhaps even a workshop located within the Mut Precinct itself – the skills to read the appropriate spell(s) over the figurines, and a knowledge of execration rituals that enabled them to understand that the figures needed to be broken and discarded at the conclusion of the rite. The priests probably performed rites calling for female figurines on an *ad hoc* basis, whenever an individual was in need of protection or a cure, and not on any official calendar day. The number of figurines recovered thus far at the Mut Precinct does not suggest that rites involving the figures took place on a daily basis, but are still significant enough for these rites to have been a semi-regular occurrence.

The next question becomes, for whom were these rites over female figurines performed? The answer, again, cannot be given with certainty, but there remain several possibilities. The persons employed in the Mut Precinct are likely candidates. An extensive network of granaries, food preparation, and other industrial buildings has been uncovered by Johns Hopkins in the area south of the Sacred Lake, which no doubt required a daily staff of several hundred or more.⁷⁷⁶ These persons may have required ceramic female figurines for prophylactic rites to stave off snake and scorpion bites at their place of work, or to cure ailments they were experiencing on site. This scenario envisions priests from the temple acquiring figurines and performing the brief magico-medical ritual right there in the precinct, enabling the priest or patient to dispose of the figurine immediately afterwards together with the refuse of the day.

Other candidates for use of these female figurines at the Mut Precinct include members of the general public. Traunecker has already observed that people naturally turned to the temple for health issues, and that the forecourt and first court of a temple were the privileged zones of healers.⁷⁷⁷ We know from representations such as the depiction of the Mut

⁷⁷⁶ On analogy with the Temple of Amun. See Serge Sauneron, *The Priests of Ancient Egypt*. Trans. David Lorton. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2002. 52: “At Karnak, when Amun was at the height of his power, the personnel present in his temple each day probably numbered in the hundreds, or perhaps even in the thousands.” Sauneron bases this statement on the data from Papyrus Harris I, which lists 86,486 personnel in the service of the Amun temple during the reign of Ramses III. For a recent translation of the relevant section of P. Harris, see Pierre Grandet, *Le Papyrus Harris I (BM 9999)*. Cairo: IFAO, 1994. I: 228-255. See also Eyre, *Work and the Organisation of Work*, 190-196.

⁷⁷⁷ Traunecker, “Une chapelle de magie guérissante,” 76.

Temple in the tomb of Khabekhnet (TT2) that members of the public were allowed into the front of the temple, at least on festival days. Persons in need of protection or relief may therefore have approached the Mut temple precinct on non-festival days looking to both acquire a figurine and employ a priest for a healing rite. While such persons may not have had access to the most interior spaces of the temple or special chapels such as that of Horwedja, they may have had the opportunity to utilize the services of the temple workshop and staff on a more informal basis for their personal health crises. We know from letters that people asked friends in the priesthood to entreaty deities for cures on their behalf.⁷⁷⁸ In other instances, letter writers assert that they are performing religious actions, such as invocations, libations, and the consulting of an oracle, on behalf of the recipient.⁷⁷⁹ All of these actions, but especially the pouring of libations and the consultation of an oracle, can be situated in or near a temple, and could have been fulfilled in person or through an intermediary.⁷⁸⁰ We also have archaeological evidence that ordinary persons could approach small shrines on the outer walls of temples for personal prayer.⁷⁸¹ Therefore, the supposition that members of the public would physically go to a temple precinct seeking a priest for a curative rite is not inappropriate. The female figurines utilized in such rites would again have been disposed of in the outer zones of the precinct following their initial use.

It remains difficult to prove the above scenarios without explicit textual evidence stating who used the female figurines and where. The archaeological data can only tell us that ceramic female figurines were disposed of in fragments in outer areas of the Mut Precinct, but cannot relate to us where exactly in the precinct the figures were employed. The idea that healing rites involving female figurines were performed somewhere on the periphery of the main sanctuary, perhaps in the forecourt or in zones outside of the enclosure wall, must therefore remain a hypothesis based on archaeological data and circumstantial evidence.

However, textual evidence like magico-medical papyri and the Book of the Temple, together with excavated materials like the magician's kit found at the Ramesseum, enable us to state more certainly that

⁷⁷⁸ Edward F. Wente, trans. *Letters from Ancient Egypt*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990. 180

⁷⁷⁹ John Baines, "Egyptian Letters of the New Kingdom as Evidence for Religious Practice." *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 1 (1) (2001) 1-31.

⁷⁸⁰ Baines, "Egyptian Letters of the New Kingdom as Evidence for Religious Practice," 9-10, 14, 25-29.

⁷⁸¹ Emily Teeter, "Popular Worship in Ancient Egypt: Contrary to what is often written, commoners had access to their deities." *KMT* 4/2 (1993) 31-34.

professional magician/physicians were those charged with reciting spells over female figurines and manipulating the objects during the rites. The role of temple staff in both destructive and curative rites is indisputable.⁷⁸² Therefore, if we understand these female figurines as a class of object that functioned to expel disease and ensure personal health, and which also required deliberate destruction, then the presence of a priest – with all of his attendant authority⁷⁸³ – would seem to be a requirement for rituals involving the figurines. As Ritner has noted, “memorized incantations against crocodiles, snakes, infant disease, et cetera, may have circulated among the population as large, but the theological basis of even these “popular” spells suggests transmission from a priestly source.”⁷⁸⁴ Also relevant is John Baines’ observation that, “Since magic can have a positive effect in countering the untoward, the more privileged and powerful should use it on behalf of others.”⁷⁸⁵ Thus, while a member of the public might have had a general idea of the words to be spoken over a magical figure, we should still place the initial responsibility for reciting spells over female figurines in the hands of priests, particularly when the figurines derive from a temple context such as the Mut Precinct.

These magical practitioners were also mobile beyond their immediate temple assignment, as again evidenced by the Ramesseum magician’s kit, so we should not be surprised to find female figurine fragments in locales such as domestic and mortuary environments as well. Since snakes, scorpions and disease could affect the dead as well as the living, prophylactic and curative rites would have been necessary in many contexts for the ancient Egyptians. Individuals would have needed protection at their place of work, at home, and in their final resting place, and so when we find female figurines in their secondary context of disposal at such sites, we can conjecture a primary ritual function for these figures as well. The presence of fragmentary ceramic female figurines at a variety of sites only reaffirms for us the importance of these magical talismans in Egyptian life, and reminds us of the variety of causes for which such objects were employed. This range of causes has also been demonstrated

⁷⁸² Quack, “La magie au temple,” 44-46; David Frankfurter, “Curses, Blessings, and Ritual Authority: Egyptian Magic in Comparative Perspective,” *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 5 (2006) 162-167.

⁷⁸³ Frankfurter, “Curses, Blessings, and Ritual Authority,” 180-184.

⁷⁸⁴ Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 207.

⁷⁸⁵ John Baines, “Display of Magic in Old Kingdom Egypt,” *Through a Glass Darkly: Magic, Dreams and Prophecy in Ancient Egypt*. Ed. Kasia Szpakowska. Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2006. 2-3.

textually in the many preserved spells calling for clay figures discussed in Chapter 3.

In sum, the newly-excavated ceramic female figurines from the Mut Precinct open new vistas into the conception and use of nude female figures in ancient Egyptian life. We have observed that such objects took a standardized form, and were therefore likely produced in a workshop environment. We have also seen that the female figurines were disposed of – and therefore likely employed – within a major state temple precinct. Owing to textual sources, we can recognize that magico-medical rituals were a common occurrence at the Karnak complex and at the Mut Precinct in particular, and can further understand that female figurines were required components of such apotropaic and healing rites. The archaeological context and condition of the Mut Precinct figurines highlights their temporary utility, which fits well with their use in rites of transference, and also suggests a link with the priestly staff, as well as the theology, of the goddess Mut. Studied as a group, the Mut Precinct figurines enable us to arrive at a closer understanding of the function of such objects in the daily life of a large state temple in the New Kingdom, Third Intermediate Period, and Late Period. The magico-medical function advocated here provides us with an alternative model to the popular votive/fertility hypothesis for ceramic female figurines, and also provides answers to questions about the figurines' manufacture, decoration, and apparent destruction. This study will doubtless encourage future analyses of excavated ceramic objects in concert with magical texts, and these will in turn shed light on classes of objects so frequently labeled 'crude,' and whose function has yet to be fully explicated.

APPENDIX A

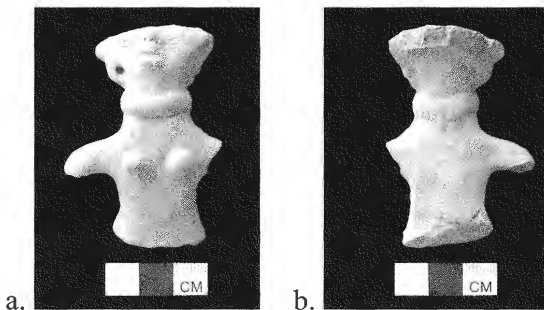
Female Figurines from the Mut Precinct (2001-2004)

All photographs by James T. Van Rensselaer unless otherwise noted. All sketches by the author.

Note: Measurements given are the maximum height, width and thickness for each figure. For figurines not available for inspection in January 2006, height and width measurements are approximate, and Munsell color, pigment, and some thickness readings are listed as N/A.

Type 1

1.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VII H Center South THH Gateway Extension 1
East face enclosure wall clearance 1/8/04

DESCRIPTION: upper portion of a female figurine with a flat head, including perforations for the insertion of hair, two earring holes preserved, a roll of clay around the neck likely indicating a necklace, arms broken off, breasts preserved; figure broken above navel

DATE: early Dynasty 18
FABRIC: Marl A2
MOLDED: No
PIGMENT: None
MUNSELL: 7.5 YR 7/2 pinkish gray
H: 6.44 cm

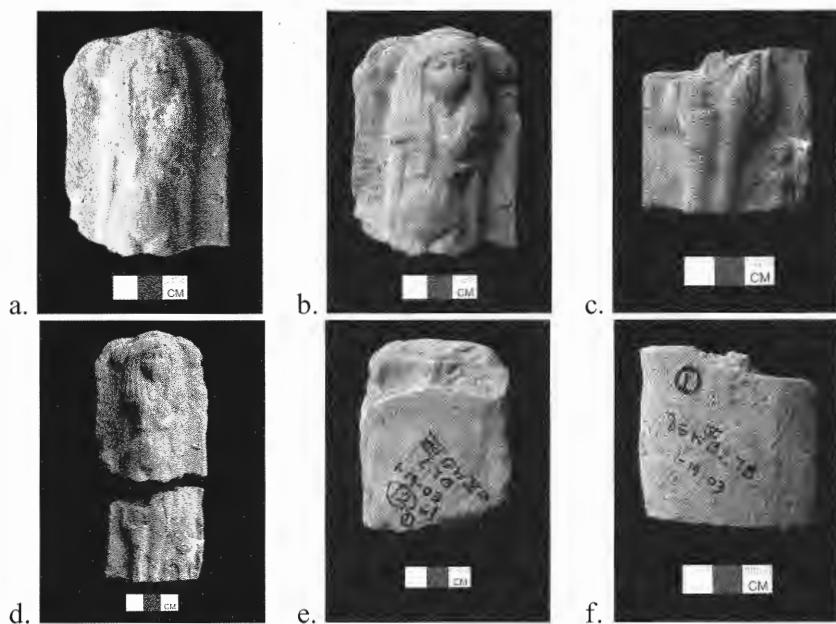
W: 4.02 cm wide including right arm

Th: 1.40 cm

COMPARANDA: B 990 from North Karnak (J. Jacquet *Karnak Nord IX*, fig. 54); EES 2899/EAO 195 from Memphis/Kom Rabi'a (Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 41 and pls. 12, 81); figurine with linen and bead hair from Gebel Zeit (Castel, Gout and Soukiasian. "Fouilles de Gebel Zeit (Mer Rouge): Première et Deuxième Campagnes (1982-1983). *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 70 (1984-85) pl. IV, 8)

Type 2

2.

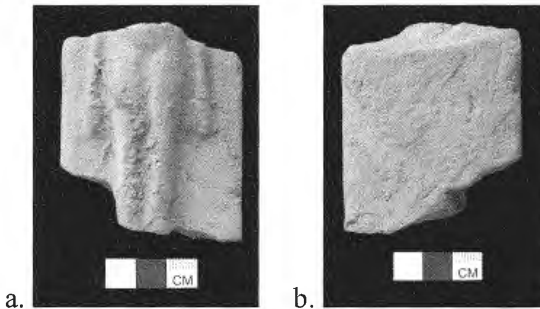


EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G West 5B Level 7B 1/19/03 (2 joining pieces, same label)

DESCRIPTION: top half of a woman on a bed, an oblong pillow under her head; woman has a long, striated wig and thin body, her arms at her sides; some traces of red paint remain, especially on the woman's face; traces of a white plaster-like substance on the woman's throat; legs on the underside of the figure

- are broken off; also, the bottom portion of the woman's body, hands at her sides, an egg-headed baby at her lower left, and traces of white substance behind the baby's head
- DATE: late Dynasty 18
- FABRIC: Nile silt
- MOLDED: Yes, top portion; bed legs likely handmade
- PIGMENT: red paint on woman's face, throat, also arm & leg (?); red on baby; white on woman and behind baby; black on hair
- MUNSELL: N/A
- H: 9.0 cm (top portion) 5.0 cm (bottom portion)
- W: 7.0 cm (top and bottom portions)
- Th: 4.0 cm (top and bottom portions)
- COMPARANDA: Brooklyn Museum 14.606 from Sawâma (Breasted, Jr., *Egyptian Servant Statues*, 96, pl.93C; Bourriau and Millard, "The Excavation of Sawâma," 33-34); OIM 14603 from Medinet Habu, especially for oblong pillow (Teeter, "Piety at Medinet Habu," 1, fig.1 and *Baked Clay Figurines*, 48, pl. 4,17); two unnumbered figurines from Deir el-Medina with baby at woman's left (Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Medineh* (1934-35), pl. XLIV, lower registers)

3.



- EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G East 5 Level 4A 1/8/04
- DESCRIPTION: ower portion of a thin female figure on a bed, arms at her sides
- DATE: New Kingdom
- FABRIC: Nile silt
- MOLDED: Yes
- PIGMENT: Red pigment on female's left arm and leg
- MUNSELL: 7.5 YR 6/3 light brown

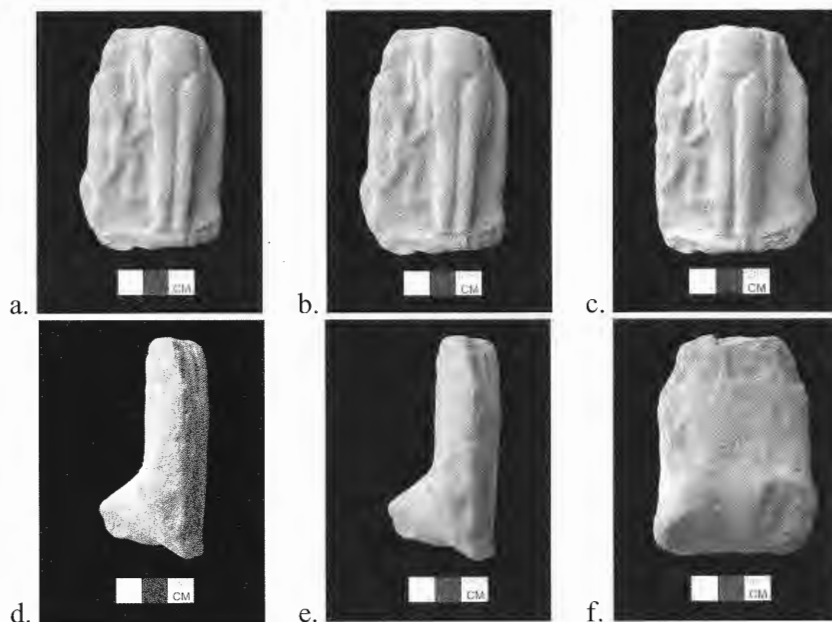
H: 6.56 cm

W: 5.94 cm

Th: 2.84 cm

COMPARANDA: EES 787 from Memphis/Kom Rabi'a (Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 36 and pls. 9, 80); TL 130b from Medinet Habu (Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, pl. 5,25)

4.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: IX G West 5 Level 1 1/12/04

DESCRIPTION: very unusual figurine: the lower portion of a thin woman lying on a bed with arms at her sides and a baby on her right; the baby has splayed arms and legs and an erect phallus, which woman touches with her right hand; the top portion of the figure is mold-made, the one preserved leg of the bed is handmade; only a portion of the footboard remains

DATE: Third Intermediate Period (Dynasties 21-25)

FABRIC: Nile silt

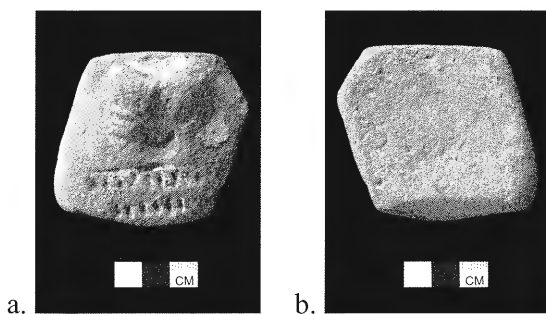
MOLDED: Yes, top portion; bed legs handmade

PIGMENT: red line down woman's left leg, red on left side of left leg, left arm, left side of bed, trace of red on the underside of the bed, possibly over a white wash; white on left side of the

- bed, on the outside pf the preserved bed leg, on the underside of the bed, on the woman's torso & around the baby; possibly everything was whitewashed and red was applied to the figures over it; red on baby's leg closest to female
- MUNSELL: back: 5 YR 7/2 pinkish gray; front: 7.5 YR 7/2 pinkish gray
- H: 8.06 cm
- W: 5.70 cm
- Th: 3.75 cm including extant bed leg; 2.26 cm excluding bed leg
- COMPARANDA: figurines from Elephantine (Honroth et al. *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 46 (1909-1910) 30-31 and Abb. 8); OIM 14603 from Medinet Habu (Teeter, "Piety at Medinet Habu," 1, fig.1 and *Baked Clay Figurines*, 48, pl. 4,17), especially for handmade bed legs

Type 3

5.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G West IVA Level 5 2nd basket 1/9/03

DESCRIPTION: lower portion of woman with hands positioned beneath the breasts, a deep, circular impressed navel, and part of the pubic triangle with stippling visible

DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

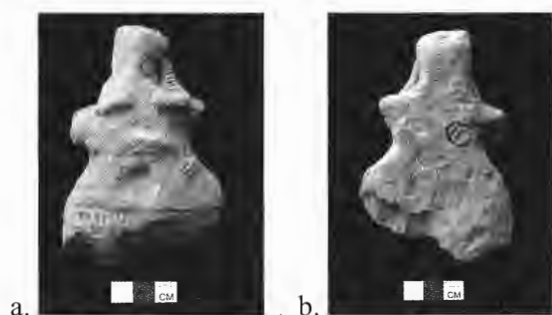
PIGMENT: white plaster-like material above breasts, around breasts, in hand marks, and in navel, next to the navel, and in pubic hairs; white wash on back; possible red wash applied over white on the front; possible trace of pinkish pigment atop white wash between the breasts

MUNSELL: front: 2.5 YR 6/6 light red

H: 6.1 cm
 W: 6.7 cm
 Th: 2.01-2.05

COMPARANDA: B 840 from North Karnak (J. Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, fig. 54)

6.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G West VI West Extension 3 south of
 Feature 1 1/30/03

DESCRIPTION: head and torso of a female with heavy wig lappets, incised both horizontally and vertically; applied left eye preserved; left hand with fingers incised rests on “hip”; breasts damaged; a large, circular impressed navel visible above an incised and stippled public triangle; arms broken at the shoulder; incidental splotches of white material on the front of the figurine

DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: None; white splotches on front are incidental

MUNSELL: N/A

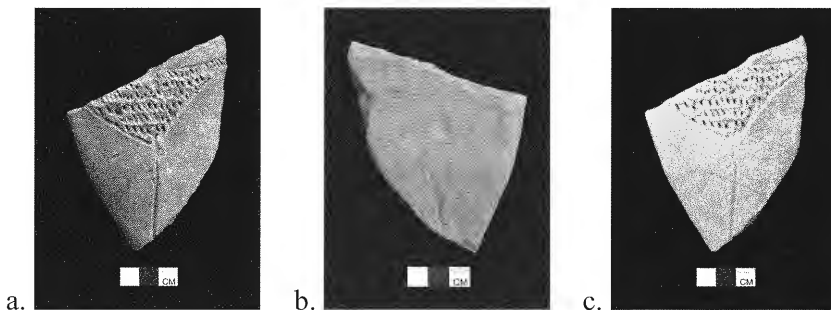
H: 12.0 cm

W: 9.0 cm

Th: 1.8 cm

COMPARANDA: Brussels KMKG/MRAH E.2527 (The Global Egyptian Museum. <<http://www.globalegyptianmuseum.org/record.aspx?id=394>> and Warmenbol, *Ombres d'Égypte*, 17 and 76 no. 42); Cairo JE 59696 from Medinet Habu (Hölscher, *Medinet Habu*, 58 and pl. 34E; Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, 88-89 and pl. 14,55); UC 59322 (Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, pl. 52 no.428)

7.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G West VI West Extension 3 2/8/03

DESCRIPTION: lower portion of a female with most of incised and stippled pubic triangle visible; incised line between legs, which likely ended in a point; figurine accidentally broken when dropped in January 2004 and subsequently repaired by the author with Uhu glue; break resulting from drop is visible in photograph c (photograph by the author)

DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: None

MUNSELL: 7.5 YR 5/4 brown

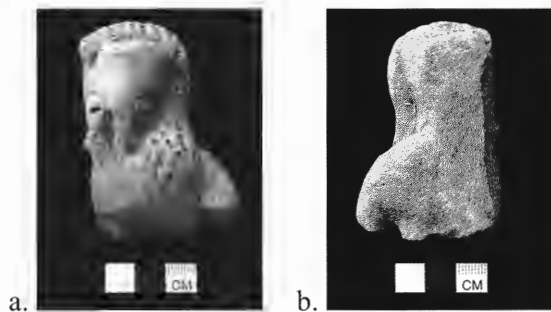
H: 7.81 cm

W: 7.82 cm

Th: N/A

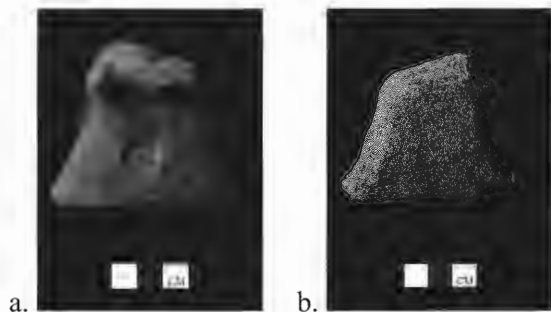
COMPARANDA: B 840 from North Karnak (J. Jacquet *Karnak Nord IX*, fig. 54); Phoebe A. Hearst Museum 6-19522 from Tukh (Elsasser and Fredrickson, *Ancient Egypt: An Exhibition at the Robert H. Lowie Museum of Anthropology of the University of California, Berkeley, March 25-October 23, 1966*. 82)

8.



- EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G West 8 Western half Level 5 #2 2/9/03
- DESCRIPTION: head, upper torso, and part of the left arm of female with a heavy incised and stippled wig, large forehead, and applied and incised eyes
- DATE: New Kingdom-Third Intermediate/Late Period (Dynasties 18-25/26)
- FABRIC: Marl clay (Marl A3?)
- MOLDED: Yes
- PIGMENT: None
- MUNSELL: 10 YR 6/3 pale brown
- H: 6.79 cm
- W: 4.6 cm
- Th: 1.85 cm
- COMPARANDA: UC 34508a from Koptos (Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, pl. 52 no. 426), UC 59321 (Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, pl. 52 no. 427); No. 1016.1 from Karnak (Leclère and Marchand. "Données Complémentaires sur les structures de Briques Crues Rubéfiées du Musée de Plein Air de Karnak." *Karnak X* (1995) 364 and pl. XIII)

9.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G West 12A Level 6 1/26/04

DESCRIPTION: thick and heavy molded torso of a woman with applied breasts and circular, incised navel

DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: Red wash on torso, above right breast

MUNSELL: 7.5 YR 6/3 light brown

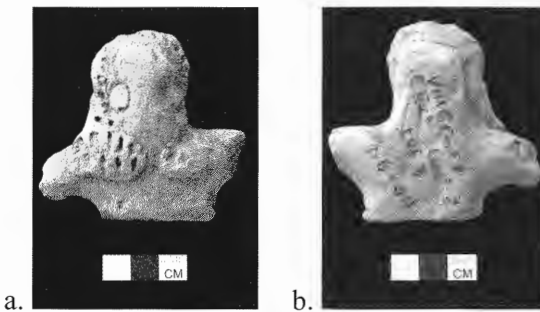
H: 6.12 cm tall

W: 7.7 cm

Th: 2.81 cm

COMPARANDA: B 456 from North Karnak (J. Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, fig. 54)

10.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 2 Level 3 1/6/04

DESCRIPTION: head and upper torso of a female with heavy stippled wig, applied circular eyes, and arms broken off below the shoulder

DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: red wash all over front and back

MUNSELL: 5 YR 6/6 reddish yellow

H: 6.69 cm

W: 7.01 cm

Th: 2.25 cm

COMPARANDA: 2166 and 2167 from the Seti I mortuary temple, Gurna (Mysliwiec, *Keramik und Kleinfunde*, cat. no. 16 and 17, 181)

and Tafel XXXII, 1-2); no. 172 from Site W at el-Ashmunein (Spencer, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein*, 38-39 and pl. 40)

11.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 5 Level 1
Feature 1 1/14/04

DESCRIPTION: badly preserved head of a female with two gouged eye sockets and an applied left wig lappet

DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: None

MUNSELL: 10 YR 5/2 grayish brown

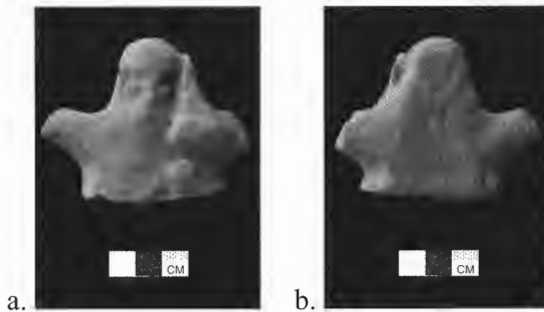
H: 5.95 cm

W: 3.62 cm

Th: 2.49 cm

COMPARANDA: UC 59326

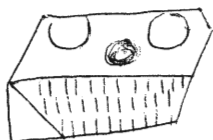
12.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 6 Level 3
Feature 1 1/18/04

- DESCRIPTION: upper portion of a female figure with applied round eyes, a bump for a nose, applied left wig lappet and left breast preserved; arms broken off at the upper arm
- DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)
- FABRIC: Nile silt
- MOLDED: Yes
- PIGMENT: Red wash over front
- MUNSELL: 7.5 YR 5/3 brown
- H: 6.12 cm
- W: 8.0 cm
- Th: 1.87 cm
- COMPARANDA: 426/I from Hermopolis (Roeder, *Hermopolis 1929-1939*, 261 §61 and Tafel 47o); no. 172 from Site W at el-Ashmunein (Spencer, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein*, 38-39 and pl. 40)

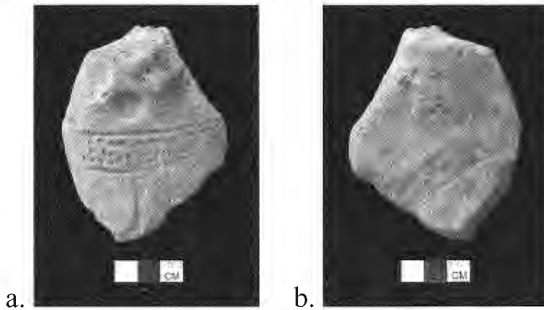
13.



a.

- EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 9 Level 2
1/29/04
- DESCRIPTION: midsection of a female figure preserved from breasts to incised pubic triangle, including incised navel, with trace remaining of the left hand touching the left breast (sketch by the author – not to scale)
- DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)
- FABRIC: Nile silt
- MOLDED: Yes
- PIGMENT: traces red wash under breasts, around breasts, on pubic triangle
- MUNSELL: for back of figurine without red wash: 5 YR 6/6 reddish yellow
- H: 4.82 cm
- W: 8.23 cm
- Th: 2.48 cm
- COMPARANDA: B 840 from North Karnak (J. Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, fig. 54)

14.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: IX G West 3 Level 5A 1/11/04

DESCRIPTION: mid-torso of a female figure with left hand touching left breast; a large, round, impressed navel; a thin, incised pubic triangle with incised dots; and an incised line between the legs

DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: red wash on front and back

MUNSELL: 2.5 YR 5/6 red

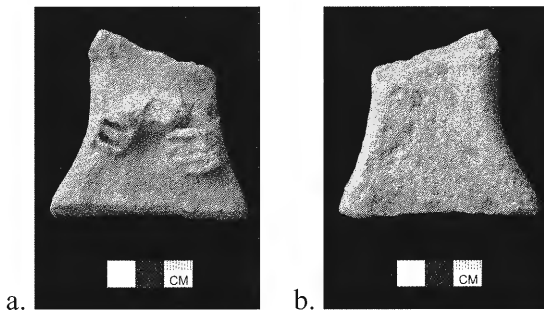
H: 9.29 cm

W: 7.37 cm

Th: 2.7 cm

COMPARANDA: TL 136f (Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, 95 and pls. 16, 61); no. 173 from Site W at el-Ashmunein (Spencer, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein*, 38-39 and pl. 40)

15.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: IX G West 3 Level 8B 1/13/04

DESCRIPTION: torso of a female with centered breasts and hands beneath them, fingers incised

DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)

FABRIC: Marl clay

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: None

MUNSELL: 10 YR 7/3 very pale brown

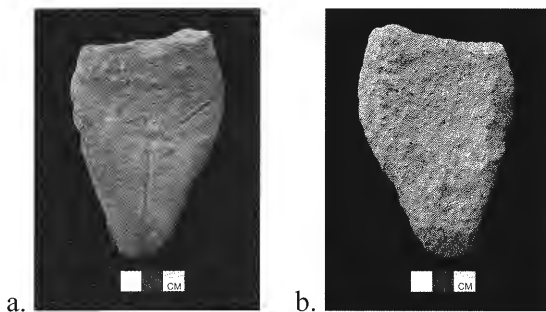
H: 6.26 cm

W: 6.80 cm

Th: 1.54 cm

COMPARANDA: Brussels KMKG/MRAH E.2527 (The Global Egyptian Museum. <<http://www.globalegyptianmuseum.org/record.aspx?id=394>> and Warmenbol, *Ombres d'Égypte*, 17 and 76 no. 42); Phoebe A. Hearst Museum 6-19522 from Tukh (Elsasser and Fredrickson, *Ancient Egypt: An Exhibition at the Robert H. Lowie Museum of Anthropology of the University of California, Berkeley, March 25-October 23, 1966*. 82)

16.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: IX G West 6 Level 3 1/15/04 basket 2 of 2

DESCRIPTION: lower body of a female with a badly eroded impressed navel, incised pubic triangle, and an incised line delineating the legs, which end in a peg

DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: possible trace on front center

MUNSELL: 5 YR 5/6 yellowish red

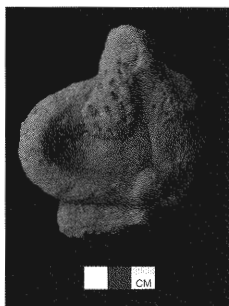
H: 10.12 cm

W: 7.14 cm

Th: 1.43 cm

COMPARANDA: B 456 from North Karnak (J. Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, fig. 54); Phoebe A. Hearst Museum 6-19522 from Tikh (Elsasser and Fredrickson, *Ancient Egypt: An Exhibition at the Robert H. Lowie Museum of Anthropology of the University of California, Berkeley, March 25-October 23, 1966*. 82)

17.



a.

EXCAVATION LOCATION: IX G West Ceramic Trench Level 4 1/22/04

DESCRIPTION: upper portion of a female with a stippled, heavy wig, applied, circular eyes, and her right arm curving over the torso and ending with a hand in a fist (?) under the breasts

DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: possible trace of red wash on front and back

MUNSELL: 7.5 YR 6/3 light brown

H: 8.81 cm

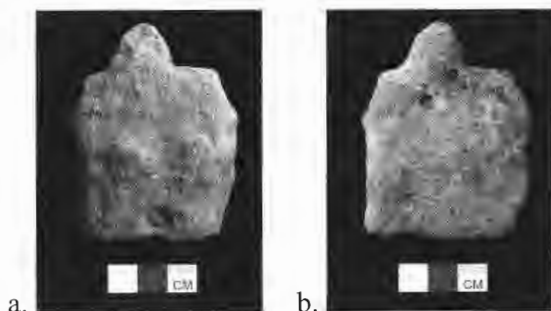
W: 8.23 cm

Th: 1.0 cm at waist; 2.63 cm at head

COMPARANDA: B 155 from North Karnak (J. Jacquet, *Karnak Nord IX*, fig. 54)

Type 4

18.

EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G East 6 Level 3b 1/19/04 (2nd)

DESCRIPTION: upper portion of a female figure with a pinched head, square shoulders, arms broken off, breasts preserved, and a round, impressed navel

DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: None

MUNSELL: 5 YR 6/4 light reddish brown

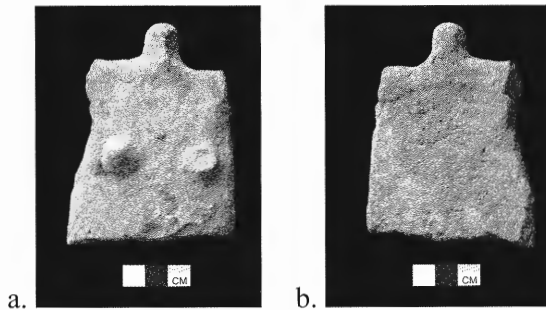
H: 7.51 cm

W: 5.76 cm

Th: 1.44 cm

COMPARANDA: Other Type 4's in this catalogue; Cairo JE 59693 from Medinet Habu (Hölscher, *Medinet Habu*, pl. 34C); UC 29792 from the Ramesseum (Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, pl. 52 no. 430)

19.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: IX G West Surface find 1/15/04

DESCRIPTION: top half of a female figure with a pinched head, square shoulders, arms broken off at shoulders, and two breasts preserved on a very flat torso

DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: traces of red wash on front, the underside of the breasts, and on back

MUNSELL: 7.5 YR 7/3 pink

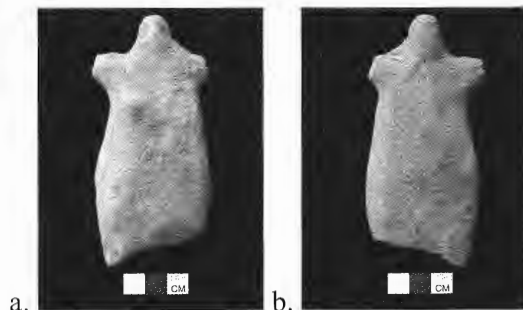
H: 9.56 cm

W: 7.41 cm

Th: 1.74 cm

COMPARANDA: Other Type 4's in this catalogue; Cairo JE 59693 from Medinet Habu (Hölscher, *Medinet Habu*, pl. 34C); UC 29792 from the Ramesseum (Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, pl. 52 no. 430)

20.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: IX G West 3 Level 3 1/8/04

DESCRIPTION: Female figure with a pinched head, arms broken off at the upper arm, right breast preserved, as well as most of the torso and hips; no pubic area indicated

DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: possible white wash over front

MUNSELL: front: 7.5 YR 7/2 pinkish gray; back: 2.5 YR 5/6 red

H: 10.66 cm

W: 5.39 cm wide

Th: 1.48 cm

COMPARANDA: Other Type 4's in this catalogue; Cairo JE 59693 from Medinet Habu (Hölscher, *Medinet Habu*, pl. 34C); UC 29792 from the Ramesseum (Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, pl. 52 no. 430)

Type 5

21.



a.

EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G West Test Trench C 1/22/02*

DESCRIPTION: torso of a female with asymmetrical breasts, a round, impressed navel, the incised top of the pubic triangle preserved, and a splotch of red beneath the left breast

DATE: Late Period (Dynasty 26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: red beneath left breast

MUNSELL: N/A

H: 7.0 cm

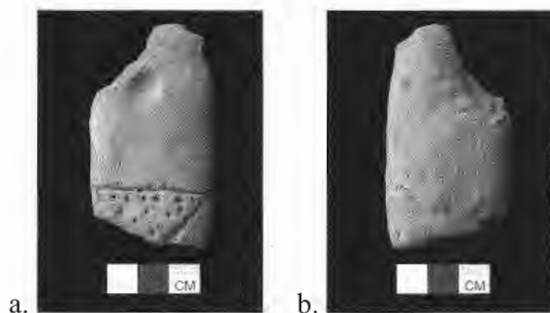
W: 5.2 cm

Th: 2.0 cm

COMPARANDA: Other Type 5's in this catalogue

*Figurine mis-labeled 1/22/01 and VIII G W 3 L.9A 2/9/02 in excavation photographs; correct date is 1/22/02 for Test Trench C as per Elaine Sullivan's field notebook, where figurine is sketched

22.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G Central 2 Level 6 1/13/03 Basket 2 of 6

DESCRIPTION: lower torso of a thin female with an impressed, circular navel and an incised and dotted pubic triangle

DATE: Late Period (Dynasty 26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: Red wash front & back

MUNSELL: 2.5 YR 5/6 red

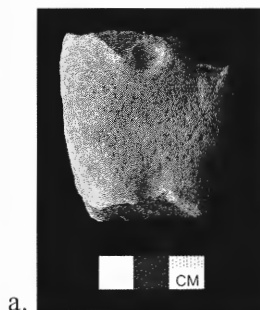
H: 6.86 cm

W: 3.95 cm

Th: 2.30 cm

COMPARANDA: Other Type 5's in this catalogue

23.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G East 2 Level 1 1/13/02

DESCRIPTION: torso of a female with a round impressed navel, but no pubic triangle marked

DATE: Late Period (Dynasty 26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: N/A

MUNSELL: N/A

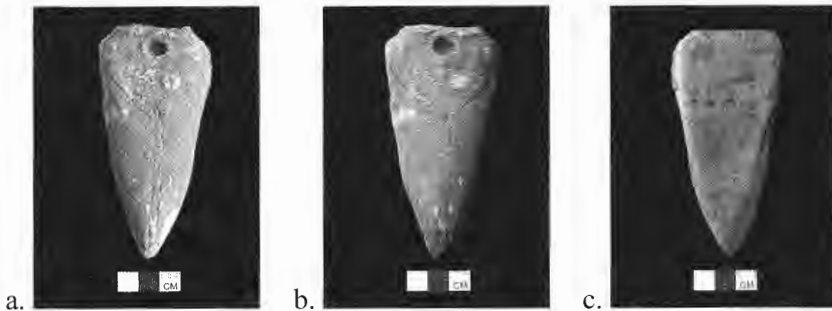
H: 6.0 cm

W: 3.5cm

Th: N/A

COMPARANDA: No. 1016.3 from Karnak (Leclère and Marchand. "Données Complémentaires sur les structures de Briques Crues Rubéfiées du Musée de Plein Air de Karnak." *Karnak X* (1995) 365 and pl. XIII)

24.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G East 2 Level 2 1/14/02

DESCRIPTION: lower half of a female with a large impressed navel, incised and dotted pubic triangle with vulva possibly indicated; two incised lines divide the legs, which end in a peg; traces of calcium accretions on front

DATE: Late Period (Dynasty 26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: None; calcium accretions on front are incidental

MUNSELL: N/A

H: 11.3 cm

W: 5.4 cm

Th: N/A

COMPARANDA: Other Type 5's in this catalogue

25.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G East 3* Level 3B 1/15/02

DESCRIPTION: lower body of a female with an incised line between the legs, which end in a peg; notebook says: "like one found previously 1/14/02"

DATE: Late Period (Dynasty 26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: N/A

MUNSELL: N/A

H: 8.0 cm

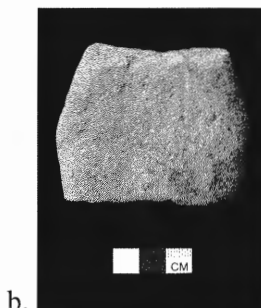
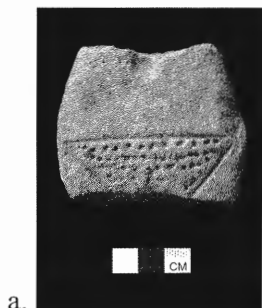
W: 5.0 cm

Th: N/A

COMPARANDA: UC 30029 from Thebes

*Figurine labeled incorrectly in slide as East 2

26.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G East 3* Level 6B 1/28/02

DESCRIPTION: mid-portion of a female figure with a circular impressed navel and incised and dotted pubic triangle

DATE: Late Period (Dynasty 26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: Red wash on front, left side of pubic triangle; on back, on the left side of the body

MUNSELL: 5 YR 6/6 reddish yellow

H: 5.98 cm

W: 7.26 cm

Th: 1.96 cm

COMPARANDA: No. 1016.3 from Karnak (Leclère and Marchand. "Données Complémentaires sur les structures de Briques Crues Rubéfiées du Musée de Plein Air de Karnak." *Karnak X* (1995) 365 and pl. XIII)

*Figurine mis-labeled in photograph as VIII G East 2 Level 6B 1/28/02; correct trench number is according to the excavation notebook

27.

EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G East 3 Level 5D 1/27/02*

DESCRIPTION: excavation notebook says: "bottom half of fertility figurine *identified by Helen Jacquet-Gordon as a typical type for 26th-30th Dynasty"

DATE: Late Period (Dynasty 26)

FABRIC: N/A

MOLDED: N/A

PIGMENT: N/A

MUNSELL: N/A

H: N/A

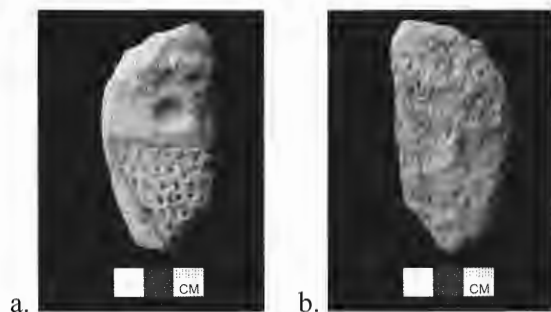
W: N/A

Th: N/A

COMPARANDA: N/A

*Figurine could not be located by the author in January 2006; no known photograph or sketch

28.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: IX G West 5 Level 2 1/13/04

DESCRIPTION: badly preserved torso of a female with remnants of two hands under the breasts, a circular impressed navel, and most of an incised and stippled pubic triangle preserved

DATE: Late Period (Dynasty 26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: possible trace of red wash under right breast

MUNSELL: 7.5 YR 7.4 pink

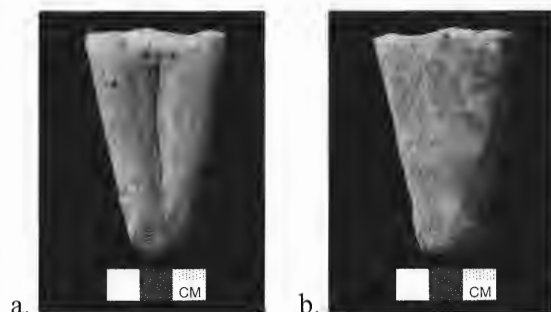
H: 7.37 cm

W: 3.69 cm

Th: 1.4 cm

COMPARANDA: Other Type 5's in this catalogue; no. 1008.1 from Karnak (Leclère and Marchand. "Données Complémentaires sur les structures de Briques Crues Rubéfiées du Musée de Plein Air de Karnak." *Karnak X* (1995) 364 and pl. XIII)*Type 6*

29.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G West VI West extension 2 1/28/03

DESCRIPTION: lower part of a female with three incised dots in pubic area, incised line delineating legs which end in peg/feet

DATE: Late Period (Dynasty 26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: None

MUNSELL: 5 YR 6/8 reddish yellow

H: 6.54 cm

W: 4.1 cm

Th: 1.95 cm

COMPARANDA: Other Type 6's in this catalogue

30.



a.



b.

EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G Central 2 Level 2 1/8/03

DESCRIPTION: lower portion of a female with a badly preserved incised pubic triangle and an incised line between the legs that continues onto the rear of the figure; the legs terminate in two feet that are flat on the bottom, but the figurine cannot stand on its own

DATE: Late Period (Dynasty 26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: Red wash on front and back

MUNSELL: 2.5 YR 5/6 red

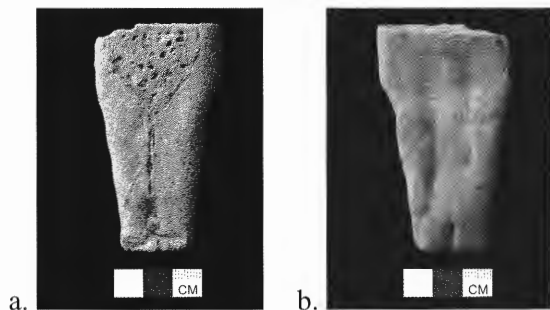
H: 5.58 cm

W: 4.89 cm

Th: 1.64 cm

COMPARANDA: Other Type 6's in this catalogue

31.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: IX G West 4 Level 3 1/12/04

DESCRIPTION: lower portion of a female with an incised and stippled pubic triangle and an incised line between the legs, which end in squared-off feet; the line dividing the feet continues onto the back of the figure

DATE: Late Period (Dynasty 26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: No

PIGMENT: None

MUNSELL: 5 YR 7/4 pink

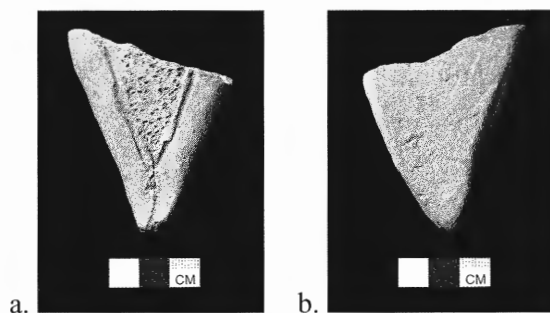
H: 7.54 cm

W: 4.30 cm

Th: 1.68 cm

COMPARANDA: Other Type 6's in this catalogue

32.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: Ramses III Rear W. Main 1/26/02

DESCRIPTION: bottom portion of a female figure with a very deep, incised and dotted pubic triangle and an incised line between the legs, which end in a peg

DATE: Late Period

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: No

PIGMENT: N/A

MUNSELL: N/A

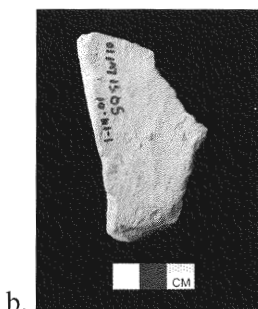
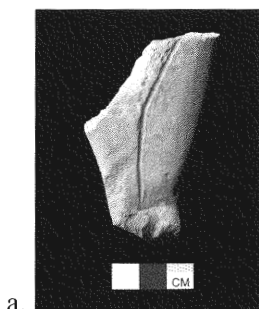
H: 7.0 cm

W: 5.0 cm

Th: N/A

COMPARANDA: Other Type 6's in this catalogue

33.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: Sq. S1 Level 10 1/14/01

DESCRIPTION: lower portion of a female figure with an incised pubic triangle and incised line between the legs, which end in feet

DATE: Late Period (Dynasty 26)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: No

PIGMENT: N/A

MUNSELL: N/A

H: 7.0 cm

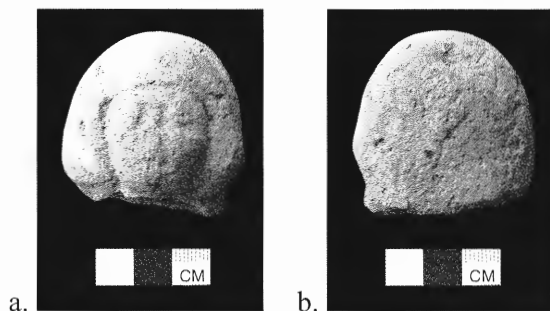
W: 5.0 cm

Th: N/A

COMPARANDA: Other Type 6's in this catalogue

Unassigned

34.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G West 5B Level 2 1/9/03

DESCRIPTION: head of a female with a round wig and square-ish face, broken at the neck; flat back

DATE: Third Intermediate Period (Dynasties 21-25)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: possible: red stripe left, right & back wig; patch near right of head

MUNSELL: back of figurine: 10 YR 7/3 very pale brown

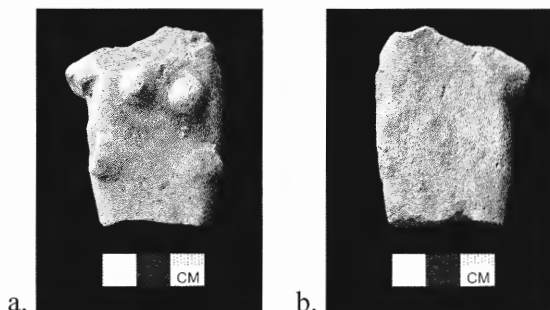
H: 4.50 cm

W: 4.59 cm

Th: 2.86 cm

COMPARANDA: OIM 14584 from Medinet Habu (Teeter, "Piety at Medinet Habu," 3, fig.3 and *Baked Clay Figurines*, pl. 10, 45)

35.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G West VI N. extension B 1/25/03*

DESCRIPTION: torso and right shoulder of a woman with arms broken off, hands beneath the breasts; found in pottery basket

DATE: Late Period to Ptolemaic Period

FABRIC: Marl A4

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: None

MUNSELL: 10 YR 8/2 very pale brown

H: 5.88 cm

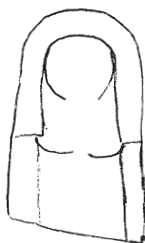
W: 4.64 cm

Th: 1.18 cm at waist; 1.5 at neck

COMPARANDA: N/A

* mis-labeled VIII G W 5 in photographs

36.



a.

EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G West 12A Middle Level 8 1/29/04

DESCRIPTION: upper body of a molded female figure; the woman has a long wig, thin body, and arms at her sides (sketch by the author – not to scale)

DATE: New Kingdom

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: Red wash on front

MUNSELL: front with red wash: 10 R 6/4 pale red; back: 7.5 YR 6/2 pinkish gray

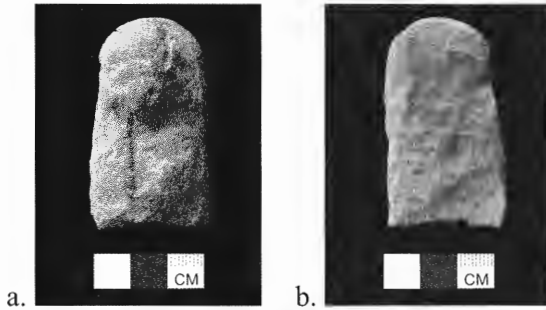
H: 5.89 cm

W: 3.55 cm

Th: 1.67

COMPARANDA: N/A

37.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G Central 3 East Extension Surface
Scraping 1/4/04

DESCRIPTION: badly eroded top portion of a female with a small face and long wig, perhaps two rows of curls above the forehead (or a modius crown?)

DATE: New Kingdom (?)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: None

MUNSELL: 7.5 YR 6/3 light brown

H: 5.56 cm

W: 3.25 cm

Th: 1.30 cm

COMPARANDA: EES 1862/EAO 146 from Memphis/Kom Rabi'a (Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 41 and pls. 12, 81)

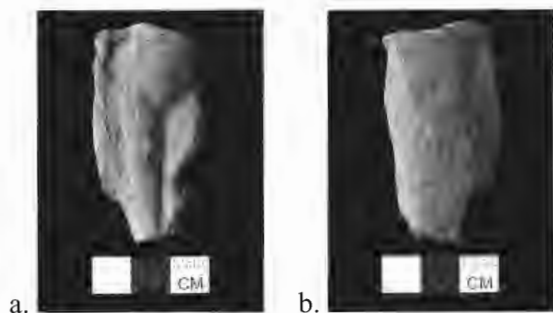
38.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G Central 6 N. trench Level 4 1/26/04

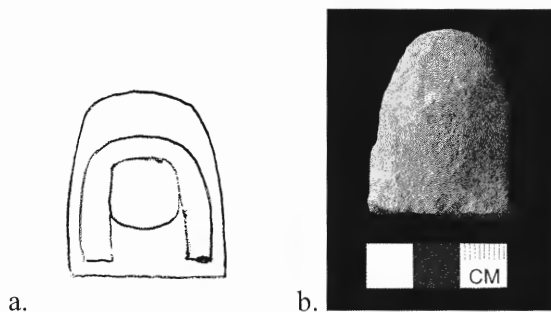
DESCRIPTION: torso of a thin female figure with two large, pointed breasts; arms broken off
 DATE: Third Intermediate-Late Period (Dynasties 21-26)
 FABRIC: Nile silt
 MOLDED: Yes
 PIGMENT: Red wash on front, sides and back
 MUNSELL: 7.5 YR 6/3 light brown
 H: 7.42 cm
 W: 4.61 cm
 Th: 1.82 cm
 COMPARANDA: OIM 14584 from Medinet Habu (Teeter, "Piety at Medinet Habu," 3, fig.3 and *Baked Clay Figurines*, pls. 10, 45)

39.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G East 6 Level 3B 1/19/04
 DESCRIPTION: lower body and legs of a female, left leg damaged, right arm preserved along the body down to knee-level
 DATE: New Kingdom
 FABRIC: Nile silt
 MOLDED: Yes
 PIGMENT: possible red wash on back of figure
 MUNSELL: 7.5 YR 7/2 pinkish gray
 H: 5.65 cm
 W: 3.03 cm
 Th: 1.45 cm
 COMPARANDA: K187 from the Merenptah mortuary temple, Gurna (Jaritz et al. *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 57 (2001) 162 and Tafel 26); UC 115 from Amarna; TL 134b, TL 134f, TL 133e from Medinet Habu (Teeter, *Baked Clay Figurines*, pl. 2,6-2,8)

40.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: VIII G East 6 Level 2 under Feature 8 1/26/04

DESCRIPTION: upper portion of a female with a large, rounded wig, face badly worn (sketch a. by the author – not to scale)

DATE: New Kingdom (mid-18th to mid-20th Dynasties)

FABRIC: Nile silt

MOLDED: Yes

PIGMENT: blue all over wig: sides, top, back; red on right side of face; black spots on face & hair

MUNSELL: 7.5 YR 6/4 light brown

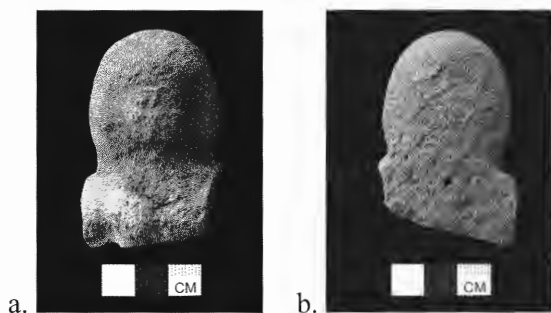
H: 4.16 cm

W: 3.09 cm

Th: 1.70 cm

COMPARANDA: EES 1861/EAO 146 from Memphis/Kom Rabi'a (Giddy, *The Survey of Memphis II*, 41 and pl. 81)

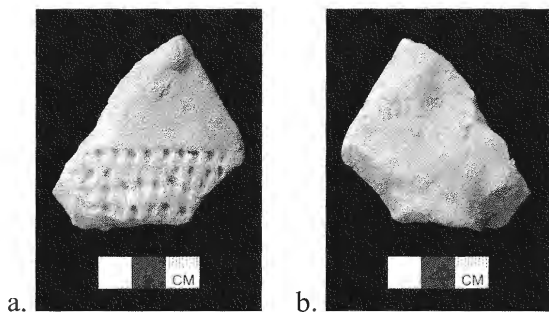
41.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: IX G West 2 Level 1 Removal 1/5/04

DESCRIPTION: head of a female with a large, round wig and badly eroded, square-ish face; right shoulder and right breast preserved
 DATE: Third Intermediate Period (Dynasties 21-25)
 FABRIC: Nile silt
 MOLDED: Yes
 PIGMENT: None
 MUNSELL: 7.5 YR 4/3 brown
 H: 6.34 cm
 W: 4.19 cm
 Th: 2.79 cm
 COMPARANDA: OIM 14584 from Medinet Habu (Teeter, "Piety at Medinet Habu," 3, fig.3 and *Baked Clay Figurines*, pls. 10, 45)

42.



EXCAVATION LOCATION: Ramses III Temple Hypostyle Hall 08.02.03 (=2.8.03)
 DESCRIPTION: fragment of a female torso with lower left breast and dotted pubic triangle preserved; possibly a Type 3
 DATE: Third Intermediate Period (?)
 FABRIC: Marl clay
 MOLDED: Yes
 PIGMENT: None
 MUNSELL: 2.5 Y 8/2 pale yellow
 H: 5.64 cm
 W: 5.55 cm
 Th: 2.02 cm
 Comparanda: N/A

CONCORDANCE OF FEMALE FIGURINES BY CATALOGUE NUMBER

U=Unassigned

Catalogue	Excavation Location	Type
1	VII H Center South TIII Gateway Extension 1 East face enclosure wall clearance 1/8/04	1
2	VIII G West 5B Level 7B 1/19/03	2
3	VIII G East 5 Level 4A 1/8/04	2
4	IX G West 5 Level 1 1/12/04	2
5	VIII G West IVA Level 5 2nd basket 1/9/03	3
6	VIII G West VI West Extension 3 south of Feature 1 1/30/03	3
7	VIII G West VI West Extension 3 2/8/03	3
8	VIII G West 8 Western half Level 5 #2 2/9/03	3
9	VIII G West 12A Level 6 1/26/04	3
10	VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 2 Level 3 1/6/04	3
11	VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 5 Level 1 Feature 1 1/14/04	3
12	VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 6 Level 3 Feature 1 1/18/04	3
13	VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 9 Level 2 1/29/04	3
14	IX G West 3 Level 5A 1/11/04	3
15	IX G West 3 Level 8B 1/13/04	3
16	IX G West 6 Level 3 1/15/04 basket 2 of 2	3
17	IX G West Ceramic Trench Level 4 1/22/04	3
18	VIII G East 6 Level 3b 1/19/04 (2nd)	4
19	IX G West Surface find 1/15/04	4
20	IX G West 3 Level 3 1/8/04	4
21	VIII G West Test Trench C 1/22/02	5

Catalogue	Excavation Location	Type
22	VIII G Central 2 Level 6 1/13/03 Basket 2 of 6	5
23	VIII G East 2 Level 1 1/13/02	5
24	VIII G East 2 Level 2 1/14/02	5
25	VIII G East 3 Level 3B 1/15/02	5
26	VIII G East 3 Level 6B 1/28/02	5
27	VIII G East 3 Level 5D 1/27/02	5
28	IX G West 5 Level 2 1/13/04	5
29	VIII G West VI West extension 2 1/28/03	6
30	VIII G Central 2 Level 2 1/8/03	6
31	IX G West 4 Level 3 1/12/04	6
32	Ramses III Rear W. Main 1/26/02	6
33	Sq. S1 Level 10 1/14/01	6
34	VIII G West 5B Level 2 1/9/03	U
35	VIII G West VI N. extension B 1/25/03	U
36	VIII G West 12A Middle Level 8 1/29/04	U
37	VIII G Central 3 East Extension Surface Scraping 1/4/04	U
38	VIII G Central 6 N. trench Level 4 1/26/04	U
39	VIII G East 6 Level 3B 1/19/04	U
40	VIII G East 6 Level 2 under Feature 8 1/26/04	U
41	IX G West 2 Level 1 Removal 1/5/04	U
42	Ramses III Temple Hypostyle Hall 08.02.03	U

CONCORDANCE OF FEMALE FIGURINES BY EXCAVATION LOCATION

U=Unassigned

Excavation Location	Catalogue	Type
VII H Center South TIII Gateway Extension 1 East face enclosure wall clearance 1/8/04	1	1
VIII G Central 2 Level 2 1/8/03	30	6
VIII G Central 2 Level 6 1/13/03 Basket 2 of 6	22	5
VIII G Central 3 East Extension Surface Scraping 1/4/04	37	U
VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 2 Level 3 1/6/04	10	3
VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 5 Level 1 Feature 1 1/14/04	11	3
VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 6 Level 3 Feature 1 1/18/04	12	3
VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 9 Level 2 1/29/04	13	3
VIII G Central 6 N. trench Level 4 1/26/04	38	U
VIII G East 2 Level 1 1/13/02	23	5
VIII G East 2 Level 2 1/14/02	24	5
VIII G East 3 Level 3B 1/15/02	25	5
VIII G East 3 Level 5D 1/27/02	27	5
VIII G East 3 Level 6B 1/28/02	26	5
VIII G East 5 Level 4A 1/8/04	3	2
VIII G East 6 Level 2 under Feature 8 1/26/04	40	U
VIII G East 6 Level 3B 1/19/04	39	U
VIII G East 6 Level 3b 1/19/04 (2nd)	18	4
VIII G West IVA Level 5 2nd basket 1/9/03	5	3
VIII G West 5B Level 2 1/9/03	34	U
VIII G West 5B Level 7B 1/19/03	2	2
VIII G West VI N. extension B 1/25/03	35	U

Excavation Location	Catalogue	Type
VIII G West VI West extension 2 1/28/03	29	6
VIII G West VI West Extension 3 south of Feature 1 1/30/03	6	3
VIII G West VI West Extension 3 2/8/03	7	3
VIII G West 8 Western half Level 5 #2 2/9/03	8	3
VIII G West 12A Level 6 1/26/04	9	3
VIII G West 12A Middle Level 8 1/29/04	36	U
VIII G West Test Trench C 1/22/02	21	5
IX G West 2 Level 1 Removal 1/5/04	41	U
IX G West 3 Level 3 1/8/04	20	4
IX G West 3 Level 5A 1/11/04	14	3
IX G West 3 Level 8B 1/13/04	15	3
IX G West 4 Level 3 1/12/04	31	6
IX G West 5 Level 1 1/12/04	4	2
IX G West 5 Level 2 1/13/04	28	5
IX G West 6 Level 3 1/15/04 basket 2 of 2	16	3
IX G West Ceramic Trench Level 4 1/22/04	17	3
IX G West Surface find 1/15/04	19	4
Ramses III Rear W. Main 1/26/02	32	6
Ramses III Temple Hypostyle Hall 08.02.03	42	U
Sq. S1 Level 10 1/14/01	33	6

CONCORDANCE OF FEMALE FIGURINES BY TYPE

U= Unassigned

Type	Excavation Location	Catalogue
1	VII H Center South TIII Gateway Extension 1 East face enclosure wall clearance 1/8/04	1
2	VIII G West 5B Level 7B 1/19/03	2
2	VIII G East 5 Level 4A 1/8/04	3
2	IX G West 5 Level 1 1/12/04	4
3	VIII G West IVA Level 5 2nd basket 1/9/03	5
3	VIII G West VI West Extension 3 south of Feature 1 1/30/03	6
3	VIII G West VI West Extension 3 2/8/03	7
3	VIII G West 8 Western half Level 5 #2 2/9/03	8
3	VIII G West 12A Level 6 1/26/04	9
3	VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 2 Level 3 1/6/04	10
3	VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 5 Level 1 Feature 1 1/14/04	11
3	VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 6 Level 3 Feature 1 1/18/04	12
3	VIII G Central 3 East Extension Unit 9 Level 2 1/29/04	13
3	IX G West 3 Level 5A 1/11/04	14
3	IX G West 3 Level 8B 1/13/04	15
3	IX G West 6 Level 3 1/15/04 basket 2 of 2	16
3	IX G West Ceramic Trench Level 4 1/22/04	17
4	VIII G East 6 Level 3b 1/19/04 (2nd)	18
4	IX G West Surface find 1/15/04	19
4	IX G West 3 Level 3 1/8/04	20
5	VIII G West Test Trench C 1/22/02	21
5	VIII G Central 2 Level 6 1/13/03 Basket 2 of 6	22

Type	Excavation Location	Catalogue
5	VIII G East 2 Level 1 1/13/02	23
5	VIII G East 2 Level 2 1/14/02	24
5	VIII G East 3 Level 3B 1/15/02	25
5	VIII G East 3 Level 6B 1/28/02	26
5	VIII G East 3 Level 5D 1/27/02	27
5	IX G West 5 Level 2 1/13/04	28
6	VIII G West VI West extension 2 1/28/03	29
6	VIII G Central 2 Level 2 1/8/03	30
6	IX G West 4 Level 3 1/12/04	31
6	Ramses III Rear W. Main 1/26/02	32
6	Sq. S1 Level 10 1/14/01	33
U	VIII G West 5B Level 2 1/9/03	34
U	VIII G West VI N. extension B 1/25/03	35
U	VIII G West 12A Middle Level 8 1/29/04	36
U	VIII G Central 3 East Extension Surface Scraping 1/4/04	37
U	VIII G Central 6 N. trench Level 4 1/26/04	38
U	VIII G East 6 Level 3B 1/19/04	39
U	VIII G East 6 Level 2 under Feature 8 1/26/04	40
U	IX G West 2 Level 1 Removal 1/5/04	41
U	Ramses III Temple Hypostyle Hall 08.02.03	42

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Abstract

This study concerns the ceramic female figurines excavated by Johns Hopkins at the Precinct of Mut in Luxor, Egypt between 2001 and 2004. The figurines date from the New Kingdom to the Late Period (ca. 1550-332 BCE). Ceramic figurines are frequently overlooked by archaeologists, art historians, and social historians because they lack the aesthetic qualities usually associated with Egyptian art. However, the Hopkins-excavated figurines display features that mark them as standardized ritual objects. I argue that ceramic female figurines were produced in workshops, utilized by magician/physicians in healing rituals, and regularly snapped and discarded at the end of their effective *«lives.»* This is a new, broader interpretation for objects that have previously been considered as toys, dolls, concubine figures, and – most recently – votive *«fertility figurines.»*

Chapter 1 presents a brief history of the Mut Precinct and summarizes the work of Johns Hopkins at the site. It also addresses the current state of figurine studies in Egyptology, including a critique of the *«fertility figurine»* theory. Finally, I present a typology for the Mut Precinct figurines.

Chapter 2 is a detailed study of the materials and manufacture of ceramic female figurines. I suggest that the figurines were manufactured by craftsmen in state-sponsored workshops, and that the red hue of many figures signals that the objects were malevolent and ultimately to be destroyed.

Chapter 3 presents translations and commentary for magico-medical spells calling for female figures of clay, which demonstrate how female figurines functioned in magical rituals. Chapter 3 also discusses a new term for *«clay figurine.»* Finally, a survey of magico-medical texts calling for other types of clay figurines is presented, highlighting the widespread use of such figures.

Chapter 4 reviews the salient conclusions of the study, and discusses the use of ceramic female figurines at the Mut Precinct specifically. This new interpretation of Egyptian female figurines broadens our understanding of objects often called *«crude»* and placed in the realm of women by demonstrating that ceramic female figurines were manufactured and acquired by men, and manipulated to heal a variety of patients. This study will undoubtedly encourage future studies of archaeological finds in concert with magico-medical texts.

Zusammenfassung

Diese Studie widmet sich weiblichen Tonfigürchen, die zwischen 2001 und 2004 in den Grabungen der Johns Hopkins-Universität im Bezirk des Mut-Tempels in Luxor, Ägypten, gefunden wurden. Die Figurinen stammen aus der Zeit zwischen dem Neuen Reich und der Spätzeit (ca. 1550-332 v. Chr.). Tonfigurinen werden von Archäologen, Kunst- und Sozialhistorikern oft wenig beachtet, weil ihnen die mit ägyptischer Kunst verbundenen ästhetischen Qualitäten fehlen. Die im Mut-Bezirk ausgegrabenen Figürchen weisen jedoch Merkmale auf, die sie als standardisierte Ritualobjekte kennzeichnen. Weibliche Tonfigürchen – so wird hier gezeigt – wurden in Werkstätten hergestellt, von Magiern und Ärzten in Heilungsritualen verwendet und nach ihrem «Leben» und ihrer Wirkungszeit zerstört und weggeworfen. Dies ist eine neue, wesentlich profundere Interpretation von Objekten, die bisher als Spielzeug, Puppen, Konkubinen und jüngst auch als Votiv- und Fruchtbarkeitsfiguren gedeutet wurden.